# SKETCHES



OF

# SWITZERLAND.

BY AN AMERICAN.



IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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STEREOTYPED BY L. JOHNSON,
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# PREFACE.

THE fragments of travels that are here laid before the reader are parts of a much more extensive work, that it was, originally, the intention of the writer to publish. This intention (for reasons on which it is unnecessary to dwell) has been, in a great measure, abandoned; though motives, that may possibly become apparent in the course of the work, more especially in its Second Part, have induced him to make the selection which is now printed.

The narrative form is the best for a book of travels, for, besides possessing the most interest, it enables the reader to understand the circumstances under which one, who appears as a witness, has obtained his facts. This form, therefore, has been adhered to here; though it is hoped that the personal details have nowhere been permitted to trespass on the more material objects of the work.

There is a certain peculiarity which all, who have seen much of different countries, must have observed

to exist everywhere, simply because it belongs to human frailty. No nation is probably to be found, in which the mass of the people do not believe themselves to be more highly endowed with the better qualities of our nature, than any of their neighbours. It is one of the fruits of travelling to cure individuals of this weakness; but, in many cases, this cure is succeeded by a state of indiscriminating and generalizing indifference, on which those who are termed "men of the world" are a little too apt to pride themselves, mistaking it for liberality and philosophy; while, in fact, they are nearly as far from the truth as when they were in the state of national complacency from which they have so lately emerged. Although communities are merely aggregations of human beings, they have their peculiar and distinctive traits, as well as individuals; and no account of nations can be of value, beyond descriptions of material things, that has not consulted the circumstances which produce those modifications of character that make up the sum of national differences.

In these volumes, however, little beyond descriptions of natural objects has been attempted; for Switzerland, enjoying probably the sublimest as well as the most diversified beauties of this sort that exist on the globe, would seem to have a claim to be treated *sui generis*. Man appears almost to sink to a secondary rank in such a country; and the writer, in this portion

of his travels, has gone little out of the way, to give him a place in the picture.

The vacuum in the narrative, and the abrupt manner in which it is laid before the reader, demand a word of explanation. The year 1828 was commenced in Paris. Thence the writer went early to England; returning, however, to France, in June, by the way of Holland and Belgium. At Paris, after this return, the narrative of Part I. commences; terminating at Milan. The rest of the year 1828, and those of 1829, 1830, and 1831, with part of that of 1832, were passed between Italy, (where the writer remained nearly two years,) Germany, Belgium, and France. The narrative in Part II. recommences at Paris, after which it tells its own tale, up to a time when all the interest of the reader in the subject will most probably cease.

Had the other portions of these letters been published, it is probable that their writer would not have escaped some imputations on his patriotism, — for, in making the comparisons that naturally arose from his subject, he has spoken in favour of American principles much oftener than in favour of American things; always, indeed, except in those instances in which his eyes gave him reason to think that the latter really deserved the preference. Just and simple as this rule would seem to be, it is much too discriminating for a numerous class of native critics, who appear to think that a man must take leave not only of his sense, but of his

senses, in order to maintain the character of a faithful son of the soil. The superiority of Switzerland, in its peculiar excellence, however, is so generally admitted, that it is to be hoped one may actually venture to assert that a mountain fifteen thousand feet high is more lofty than one of fifteen hundred, or that Mont Blanc is a more sublime object than Butter Hill!

The writer does not expect much favour for the political opinions that occasionally appear in these letters. He has the misfortune to belong to neither of the two great parties that divide the country, and which, though so bitterly hostile and distrustful of each other, will admit of no neutrality. It is a menacing symptom that there is a disposition to seek for a base motive, whenever a citizen may not choose to plunge into the extremes that characterize the movements of political factions. This besetting vice is accompanied by another feeling, that is so singularly opposed to that which everybody is ready to affirm is the governing principle of the institutions, that it may do no harm slightly to advert to it. Any one who may choose to set up a semi-official organ of public opinion, called a newspaper, however illiterate, base, flagrantly corrupt, and absolutely destitute of the confidence and respect of every man in the community, may daily pour out upon the public his falsehoods, his contradictions, his ignorance, and his corruption, treating the national interests as familiarly as "household

terms," and all because he is acting in an admitted vocation; the public servant, commissioned to execute the public will, may even turn upon his masters, and tell them not only in what light they are to view him and his conduct, but in what light they are also to view the conduct of his associates in trust; in short, tell them how to make up their judgments on himself and others; and all because he *is* a public servant, and the public is his master: but the private citizen, who merely forms a part of that public, is denounced for his presumption, should he dare to speak of matters of general concernment, except under such high sanction, or as the organ of party.

It may be well to say at once, that this peculiar feeling has not been permitted to influence the tone of these letters, which have been written, in all respects, as if the republic did not contain one of those privileged persons, honoured as "patriots" and "godlikes," but as if both classes were as actually unknown to the country as they are certainly unknown to the spirit and letter of its institutions.

When the writer first arrived in Europe, he had occasion to remark, almost daily, the number and magnitude of the errors that existed in relation to the state of this country. Allusions are occasionally made to this subject, in the course of these letters, but not always with the same degree of surprise, or with precisely the same conclusions. The apparent discrepan-

cies on this head, as well, perhaps, as on one or two other points of opinion, have arisen as a natural consequence from the difference in the order of time. At the period when Part I. commences, the writer had been in Europe but two years; whereas his visit had already extended to six, before the journey related in Part II. was begun. It has been believed to be the fairest course to leave the impressions as they originally stood in his journal, or rather letters, for many of these letters were actually written at, or near, the period of their dates.

As so much of Part II. relates to other countries besides Switzerland, the writer, lest some one, misled by the title he has selected, may feel disposed to complain, deems it no more than fair to admit the fact in the Preface. Switzerland certainly is the leading point in the whole work, and it has been thought sufficiently so, to authorize the use of its name in the title page.

# SWITZERLAND

IN

# 1828.

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## LETTER I.

DEAR ———

IT was a moment of glorious anticipation, when the carriage drove through the porte cochère, into the rue de Sêvre, and we found ourselves fairly on the road to Switzerland! Two seasons in Paris, and one in London, had shown us our fellows, to dull satiety; and, apart from the delights of novelty, a common-place converse with men was about to give place to a sublime communion with nature. The recent journey through Holland, too, served to increase the satisfaction; for it was like bringing the two extremes of scenery into the same picture, to hurry thus from the most artificial and the tamest of all landscapes that has any pretensions to beauty, into the very presence of all that is grand and magnificent in natural formation. The streets

of Paris seemed interminable, nor do I think I breathed without restraint until, leaving the barrière du Trone behind us, we began to scour along the highway towards Charenton. We passed the little brick edifice in which the gallant Henri IV. is said to have lodged la belle Gabrielle, and, descending the declivity to whose side the village clings, crossed the Marne, and were again in the country.

It had rained a little in the morning, and, as what is called the gras de Paris is, in truth, the *gras* of all around Paris, the roads were greasy—I know no better word—and, for horses that are never corked, not entirely without danger. We were travelling limonière; or, in other words, in the place of the pole a pair of shafts had been attached to the carriage, and our team was composed of three of the sturdy Norman horses so well known on the French roads; the postilion riding the near horse, with traces so long as to enable him to travel wide of the others, and to control the movement. This beast slipped and fell. Rolling over, he caught the leg of his rider beneath his body. The precious Gorcum coach, of which you have heard, was left in Paris on sale, as worthless, and a French travelling calèche had been purchased in its place. The latter had a dicky and a rumble. I was seated on the former when the accident happened. Jumping down, the horses were backed, and the postilion, who lay quite helpless, was enabled to extricate his limb.

The poor fellow muttered a few sacr-r-r-es, made a wry face or two, and limped back into the saddle. At the next relay he still walked, but with difficulty.

At Melun this accident became the subject of conversation among the postilions and stable-boys, most of whom were men of la nouvelle France, or youths who no longer adhere to the prejudices of their fathers, and who admire the new philosophy and the new fashioned boots. There was, however, a solitary relic of the ancien régime present, in the person of an old man, who wore a powdered club as thick as a large beet-root, and whose whole air had that recherché character, that always distinguishes the Frenchman of 1786 from him whose proper element appears to be revolution. The old man listened to the account of the tumble with great gravity; nor did he utter a syllable until he had satisfactorily ascertained that no bones had been broken. Then, approaching with a politeness that would be deemed *ultra* at Washington, he enquired if "Monsieur knew whether the postilion, who had met with the fall, wore the ancient or the modern boot?" When told the former, he turned to his noisy revolutionary comrades, with a grimace replete with sarcasm, and cried, "Aha! voyez vous mes enfans — les anciennes modes ont aussi leur mérite!"

The old man was right. But for the celebrated boot at which travellers are so apt to laugh, it is

probable the limb would have snapped like a pipe-stem. When one sees the manner in which French horses go skating along the slippery roads, he understands, at once, the whole mystery of this extraordinary part of a postilion's equipments.

We intended to look at Fontainebleau, and it was yet early when we drove into the forest, which, by the way, will not compare with that of Compiègne, of which you have already had some account. The town, like nearly every other French country town, is of no great beauty or cleanliness, though, perhaps, a little better than common, as respects the latter property. We ordered dinner, and hastened to the château.

This palace was principally built by François I., in the well-known style of his age—a sort of French-Elizabethan architecture. It has not been much frequented since the accession of the Bourbons, though Henry IV., the first of that line,* was accustomed to pass some of his time at

* Every one knows that the French crown descends in the male line only. In 1270, Louis IX., commonly called St. Louis, was on the throne. This king left many sons; the eldest, as a matter of course, succeeding. The sixth and youngest, was Robert, Comte de Clermont; who married the heiress of the Baron de Bourbon, one of the great nobles of the kingdom. In 1327, Louis de Clermont, their son, was created Duc de Bourbon, and Peer of France. In the 14th century, Anthony Duc de Bourbon, the head of this branch of the royal family, married the heiress of the little kingdom of Navarre, and assumed, in his own person, the title of king. By the deaths of the three brothers, Francis II., Charles IX., and Henry III., Henry, King of Navarre, became the

it. It is scarcely royal, except in extent, having but few magnificent rooms, and I think none that are in very good taste. At least, none such were shown to us. The principal apartment was a salle de Diane, a gallery of some size, but of more tawdriness than taste. Of course, we saw the rooms

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head of his family, and mounted the throne of France, as Henry IV., in 1589. He was, of course, the first sovereign of the family of Bourbon, though always of the ancient race. He was related, *by the male line*, or by that line which carried title, only in the 21st degree to his predecessor, though there had been many intermarriages. By the female he was closely connected with the three last kings. Three hundred and nineteen years elapsed between the death of St. Louis and the succession of his descendant Henry IV. The Princes of Condé were descended from a Duc de Bourbon, the grandfather of Henry IV., and the Princes of Conti were descended from the Princes of Condé. The Princes of Conti have been extinct for some time, but the last Prince of Condé (the father of the Duc d'Enghein) committed suicide in 1830. He was the *cadet* of the house of Bourbon, tracing his descent, *in the male line*, to no king nearer than St. Louis, or through an interval of 560 years. The house of Orleans branched off from Louis XIII. in 1643, or 187 years before its accession. Louis XIV., the grandson of Henry IV., succeeded in placing his second grandson, Philippe d'Anjou, on the Spanish throne. From him are descended (always in the male line, none other counting in this family until the recent accession of Donna Isabella II.) the sovereigns of Spain and Naples, and the Duke of Lucca, who stands next in reversion to the Duchy of Parma. It follows that Louis Philippe I., of France, is the youngest prince of his family, his own children excepted, according to the order of primogeniture; Charles X., the Dauphin, the Duc de Bordeaux, all the Spanish, Neapolitan, and Lucchese princes coming before him. When the other powers of Europe consented to the accession of

of Napoleon, the table of abdication, and the leg that was kicked. I was more struck with the imperial wash-basin, than with any thing else. It was of truly regal dimensions. The emperor appears to have been a connoisseur in this piece of furniture, for this was the fourth or fifth of his wash-basins I have seen and coveted, all being of most enviable dimensions; though I have never yet been able to find their pendants in any shop, except in the shape of punch-bowls.

The rooms occupied by Pius VII. are large, airy, and commodious—the best, indeed, in the palace; though far from being either rich or regal.

I did not like the little we saw of the gardens. It is not an easy matter to make trees and water and verdure disagreeable to the eye; but it would be quite easy to make their combination more agreeable than it is found to be here. One or two vistas, into the forest, too, were any thing but successful.

There was one gallery filled with busts, that looked more like a travelling exhibition of wax-work, than any thing of the kind I remember to have seen. Washington's head was among them.

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Philippe of Anjou to the throne of Spain, they conditioned with Louis XIV., his grandfather, that he should renounce, for himself and his successors, all claims to that of France. Louis signed the treaty, but protested, at the time; saying that the rights of primogeniture were a fundamental law of the monarchy, and that no head of the family could bind a successor to their relinquishment.

We did not see the room that was the scene of the tragedy of Monaldeschi. It was described to us as being beneath the aforesaid salle de Diane. What a revolution in opinions, since the days when a queen who had abdicated, dared to cause a follower, and he not a natural born subject, to be executed in the palace of a prince, of whom she was merely a guest!

We left the château by its great court, an area of some two or three acres, in which the grass was literally growing; a certain proof that the palace was not in favour; for of all probable events, I take it, grass would be the least likely to grow beneath the feet of courtiers. Courtiers and demagogues, you know, are my especial aversion. They are animals of the same genus, classed in different species by the accidents of position.

The next day we posted on, leisurely, to Auxerre, passing the Yonne at its celebrated bridge. This river, a stream of the size of the Mohawk, murmured before the door of the inn where we lodged.

We were now quite without the influence of Paris, and effectually in the provinces. The real rusticity of France, to say the truth, is very rustic! The country was beginning to be vine-growing, and, for a great relief, it became decidedly uneven. Rain—rain—rain. I stuck to the dickey, however, to the last, and was compelled to stop at a place called Avallon, with a slight cold and fever. An hour's rest subdued the latter, but it was de-

termined to pass the third night where we were, or at the distance of only twenty-seven posts from the capital. This was not hurrying on towards the great object of our destination, certainly, but then the landlady gravely assured us, the environs of the place were not only called, but were moreover worthy to be called, la petite Suisse.

We wasted an hour in looking at the fauxbourgs, which were pretty enough, but which were much farther from Switzerland in character, than in distance. Our salon at the inn was decorated with pictures, emblematical of different countries. One was a belle of fair hair and rosy cheeks; another, a belle of raven locks and pencilled eyebrows; a third, a belle of brown ringlets and azure orbs. Les Etats Unis were particularized in the person of—to use the southern vernacular—a *wench*, as black as a coal!

If it were possible to take the sense of the people of Europe on the subject, I am persuaded it would be found that nine out of ten believe the Americans are any thing but white. You may remember the account I have given you of our residence on the banks of the Seine, in a small country house, that was once a sort of hunting lodge of Louis XV. One day, while in the grounds, overlooking the gardener, a servant ran to inform me that the carriage of "son excellence," the American minister, had driven into the court. He was told to return, and to say I would join "son excellence" in a few minutes. "Monsieur

l'ambassadeur," said honest Pierre, the gardener, "est un grand?" I told him he stood six feet four inches, English, in his stockings. Pierre had seen him one day, on the boulevards at Paris. Curious to know how the minister could have been recognised, under such circumstances, I delayed paying my respects to "son excellence," another minute, in order to inquire. Pierre had taken an interest in America, on account of our relations, and had learned, in the course of his gossiping, that the minister was "un grand," and meeting a strapping negro on the boulevards, he jumped to his conclusion. These things sound odd to us, and I can remember the time when I used to set them down as traveller's wonders, but, believe me, they are religiously true.

From Avallon, the country became more pleasing, and, occasionally—a rare quality in France—it approached the picturesque. La belle France ought to be construed into la France utile, for the beautiful in this sense means no more than the beautiful of a husbandman; that is to say, easy to plough, and well ploughed.

One league of the road I well remember, for it was the first really beautiful bit of natural scenery I had then met with in the country. There was a deep and bold valley, a curious geological formation of rock, and a tumbling water-course. All this was greatly aided by a hamlet, half buried in trees, which stood on a sort of promontory, and which terminated in a ruin; woods finely scattered,

and the temporary disappearance of vineyards; for the vine, though so high-sounding and oriental in the pages of a book, like the olive, invariably lessens the beauty of a country, except it fringes mountain terraces, where, indeed, both help to make up the sum of the picturesque, though quite as much through association as through the eye.

In the course of the last day, we had more than once seen cows at work in the plough, and, in one instance, we saw a woman added to the team. The country physicians, too, with their saddle-bags and hardy roadsters, had a rural look. If you had travelled through endless lines of nearly leafless trees, over paved roads, and athwart open wastes covered with stubble, unrelieved by even a house, except those which are crowded into dirty, squalid, monotonous villages, for leagues—leagues —leagues, you would know how to prize the appearance of even an apothecary on horseback! Most of these travelling leeches, I observed, had holsters; but whether they contained pistols, or something more dangerous, I could not ascertain.

We reached Dijon, the ancient, storied capital of Burgundy, in good time for dinner. The Osages, of whom I spoke in a former letter, had preceded us, and were making a sensation. I believe, however, I forgot to give you the history of this portion of our red brethren. They had been induced by a Frenchman to come to Europe on a speculation. As this motive was altogether too vulgar to be openly attributed to men who

were to pass for warriors and heroes, it was varied according to circumstances. With the pious, they came for the good of their souls; with the refined, to get a few hints on civilization; and with the political, to lay the ground-work of future alliances, against the day when they were to wage war on the Americans! Absurd as the latter may seem, I have been distinctly told it, and believe it to be true. It is not an easy matter to make an American who has never been abroad comprehend the great ignorance of our situation which prevails all over Europe;—I know nothing to which it can be so aptly compared, as it may be to the ignorance of Europe which exists all over America. I was shown, at Paris, a memorial addressed to the French government by the speculator in question, in which he laid great stress on the benefit France might anticipate from a trade with this powerful tribe; a trade that, every one knows, cannot take place so long as this republic holds its present authority over the territory they occupy. Mrs. ——, a countrywoman of ours, who circulated freely in high French society, related to me an amusing contre tems that occurred to herself, in connexion with these very Osages. She was making a morning call, and, speaking French fluently, was not recognised by another visiter, who had just come from the levee of these gentlemen. The latter was voluble in their praises, and from extolling their paint, big ears, and tomahawks, she had got as far as the *ulterior political views*, con-

nected with a visit to France, when she was stopped by the mistress of the house, who *did* know Mrs. ——, and thought the other indiscreet. The latter had got so far, before she was stopped, however, as to have expatiated on the warm attachment of the travelling heroes to France, and on their utter detestation of the Americans.*

Dijon has some remains of the middle ages, but of what interest are such things to one who is within forty leagues of Switzerland, and who is actually in sight of the Jura?

* It is now some eight years since these savages awakened the hopes of certain French statesmen, and yet the republic still holds quiet sway over Louisiana, and the Osages; and Charles the Xth—where is he? America has never yet been told the half that is meditated against her on the other side of the Atlantic, for little besides silly and fulsome panegyrics have been repeated at home; little else, it is to be feared, being found acceptable.

As for our red brethren, in the end, I believe, they succeeded in piously *humbugging* the Holy Father himself.

## LETTER II.

MY DEAR ——

THIS was the 17th of July, 1828, and on the 18th July, 1826, we first put foot in France. We were about to quit it that day two years. How much is there to admire in that great country; how much to shut the eyes to in disgust!

The first relay, after quitting Dijon, was at an insignificant hamlet, called Genlis. Struck by the name, and by the sight of a herd of cows, and of that of a small château near the post-house, by a queer association we were led to inquire if this was the spot where Mesdames de Silléry et de Genlis took the baths of milk? The good woman of the house laughed at the question, and protested that there was not milk enough in the whole village to furnish baths for two so great ladies. Though often mistaken for such, this is not *the* Genlis. The latter is further north, at no great distance from Paris.

By the way, this word château is greatly abused of late. It properly signifies, I believe, a castellated and moated edifice; but it is now applied, without distinction, to every thing that looks like the residence of a country gentleman. The French usu-

ally term the palace of the Tuileries the château. The old Louvre *was* a château; the name, I presume, has been transferred insensibly to the more modern abode of royalty.

We had before us, now, a plain of great extent, whose eastern boundary was a faint line of blue. This was the beginning of those vast ranges of mountains, which, commencing in nearly perpendicular walls of rocks on the shores of the Mediterranean, are only lost in the remotest provinces of eastern Europe. It is true that those before us were merely a sort of outwork of the Alps, the Jura; but they bear such a relation to this grand geological formation, as the bastion bears to the citadel. We tried to believe that some of the distant ridges were in Neufchâtel, a small territory that, by one of the late political changes, has become a part of the Helvetic Confederation.

About noon we came to the margin of our plain, which is watered by the Saone, on crossing which we entered Auxonne, one of the fortresses of this frontier, and a place that is now celebrated as the spot where Napoleon received his military education. You know that France is girt with triple lines of fortresses on the side of the continent; though these near the mountains are of much less magnitude and strength than those which lie nearer to Belgium and Germany. Diplomacy is made to perform the part of ramparts in this region, Switzerland being as good a fortress, in the hands of friends, as can be desired.

We began to ascend gently on quitting Auxonne, and we were soon beyond the limits of Burgundy, and within those of Franche Comté. This large and important province was one of the acquisitions that Louis XIV. was enabled to keep. On a height, that lay a short distance on our left, was a ruin, which the guide-books say was formerly a castle of Roland. This prince and Cæsar seem to divide the French ruins between them, as the parchments have it, "share and share alike." They are tenants in common of half the round towers one meets with between Calais and Marseilles.

The day was lovely, and I had persuaded A—— to share my seat on the carriage box. As we rounded the little height on which the ruin is seated, she exclaimed, "What a beautifully white cloud!" Taking the direction from her finger, I saw an accurately defined mass, that resembled the highest wreath of a cloud whose volume was concealed behind the mountains of the Jura, which, by this time, were so near as to be quite distinct. There was something that was not cloudy, too, in its appearance. Its outline was like that of a chiseled rock, and its whiteness greatly surpassed the brilliancy of vapour. I called to the postilion, and pointed out this extraordinary object. "Mont Blanc, monsieur." We were, according to the maps, at least seventy miles from it, in an air line!

I shall never forget the thrill of that moment. There is a feeling allied to the univer-

sal love of the mysterious, that causes us all to look with pleasure at any distant object which insensibly leads the mind to the contemplation of things that are invisible. The imagination steals down the sides of distant peaks into the valleys, which it is apt to people with creatures from its stores of recollections, or, perhaps, by its own creative powers. This glimpse of the glacier, for it was only a glimpse, the shining mass settling behind the Jura as we descended on a gallop towards Dole, transported us all, over a long line of road, into the very heart of the country towards which we were hastening. Mont Blanc, it is true, is not in Switzerland, but it is a part of the same wonderful formation that renders Switzerland so remarkable, and the eye actually swept across two of the cantons, and half of Savoy, to take in this speck of aerial brightness. I never before so ardently longed for wings, though their possession used to be one of the most constant of my youthful aspirations.

After quitting Dole we traversed another wide valley, that is watered by the Doub and its tributaries, until we reached the foot of the Jura. Here, for the first time in Europe, we saw Indian corn, though of a quality much inferior to the luxuriant growth we have at home. It was a great relief to be fairly rid of the monotony of French husbandry, and of the fatiguing plains, for a nature that in a great degree defied the labours of man. The ascent was rather gradual than severe, but we

made an entire relay of two posts, without breaking into a trot. The weariness of the ascent was relieved by glimpses at the country just passed, and at nightfall we drew near a wild gorge, (the first of the hundreds it has been our good fortune since to look upon and dwell amongst,) which had that pleasing mixture of nature and art that is wanting in America, but which abounds over all the more ancient regions of the eastern hemisphere. Precipitous rocks rose to a great height on both sides of the pass (the only one practicable for a road) crowned with the ruins of castles, and fortified by works that are not yet considered useless. In the very pass, which is only a few hundred feet in width, is crowded a town called Salins. This place had, in a great degree, been destroyed by fire, and, although it was rising from the desolation in better buildings than before, I do not remember to have entered a scene of greater confusion and ruin, than was presented, as we slowly dragged our way, in the gloom of twilight, into its narrow and dilapidated streets.

Salins, as the name would indicate, is connected with the manufactory of salt. The town was so filled that we found lodgings with difficulty. We got in, at length, at an inferior tavern, where, as usual, we were made to pay more than common prices, for fare that was worse than common. Take counsel of an old traveller, and never go to a second-rate house, in any town less than a capital, such invariably being the penalty. We had or-

dered tea, and when we hinted that its colour was not quite as high as would be agreeable, the mistress of the house gravely assured us it must be good, as she had that moment procured it *from the apothecary!* The good woman believed she was administering medicine. The virtues of tea, as a common beverage, had not yet penetrated this part of the Jura.

The chevaux de renfort, on the following morning, gave notice that we were to climb; and climb we did, scarcely crawling for the first hour or two. Slow as was our progress, we soon ascended into an entirely new world. The runs of water were no longer turbid and dirty, as was the case, almost without exception, from Calais to Dole; the houses, though still wanting in neatness, became picturesque and rural in their forms, ingredients in a landscape in which most of France is greatly deficient. Their roofs projected, to cast the snows from the doors, and the layers of shingles were bound to the rafters by poles loaded with large flat stones. The panoramas and engravings had already taught us that this usage was Swiss. The whole character of the country too, was changed, for, although we occasionally descended to cross a wide valley, the region, as a whole, was mountainous and savage. In one instance, we went up a long hill-side, and plunged into a dark forest of larches, that, at once, transported us back to America. I do not mean that the larch is common in our woods, for it is not; but the general

features of these Jura wilds are sufficiently like those of the pine, to maintain the resemblance.

We reached at last, a point where the road overlooked another broad valley, or plain, through which flowed a stream of some size, and at whose farther side stood a town. The mountain rose like a wall beyond, to an elevation much greater than any thing we had yet seen. The river ran northward, and yet it was the Doubs, a tributary of the Rhone. It makes a circuit here among the hills, inclining to the southward, however, before it arrives at Besançon.

It began to rain, and the clouds settled in dense mist on the black fields of larches. In this state of things, we dashed into Pontarlier, the last town of France, and the end of the post route. This place, though particularly well washed on the present occasion, had an air of general neatness that is not common in French villages. Its principal street was wide and clean, the houses appearing much more comfortable than usual; but I owe it to this part of France to say, that a want of filth is much more prevalent here than it is farther west.

There are no post routes established by law in Switzerland; but on every road that touches one from any other country, arrangements are made to transport the traveller as far as the nearest town. The post-master at Pontarlier agreed to send us on, forthwith, to Val Travers, or half the distance to Neufchâtel.

It rained when we left the post-house, but not

hard enough to drive A—— and myself from the carriage box. Enveloped in a good cloth cloak, and protected by an umbrella, we determined to brave the weather, and to enter Switzerland with our eyes open. That dark misty barrier of mountain, which crossed our path like a wall, and which loomed before us through the warm mist, powerfully awakened curiosity, and we were desirous of witnessing the rising of the curtain.

We were soon at the base of the hills, where the road inclined southwardly. At times, the mist descended nearly to our own level, (we were already at a great elevation, though in a valley,) completely shutting out the view of the mountain. Then it rained like a deluge, and we were glad to ensconce ourselves in the cloth. Presently the wind blew in our teeth as if discharged by a pair of gigantic bellows, and the carriage inclined more to the eastward. In the midst of the mêlée of wind, mist, and rain, I perceived that we were galloping through a narrow gorge, the road the whole time being excellent, and as level as a floor.

The wind and rain ceased, leaving the atmosphere charged with humidity, the hills loaded with vapour, and the air mild and balmy. Casting aside the cloak, and lowering the umbrella, we looked eagerly around. The gorge that had just been passed it would scarcely be exaggerated to term a mountain-gateway, and we were in a strait and deep valley, which soon diverged into two, one leading northward, the other in a north-easterly

direction. At the point of separation a high rocky promontory obtruded itself, directly across the line of our route, commanding by its position both passes. It was crowned by long irregular piles of buildings, castellated and fortified, that frowned on the very margin of the precipice. This was the Château de Joux, the last hold of France on this road, and celebrated as the prison in which the ruthless policy of Napoleon caused Touissant to linger out the close of a life that had commenced within the tropics. The transition from the climate of St. Domingo to that of the Jura, was in itself a cruel, and, in this case, a most unmerited punishment.

When will mankind cease to regard only the gorgeous points in the history of this extraordinary soldier, and to weigh him and his career in the scales of eternal justice? I can answer my own question. This will happen, when men cease to say, "such and such acts are for my interests," substituting, "such is my duty." Our own country is filled with Napoleons on a small scale. How often is the word "*interest*" dinging in our ears, and how seldom are we required to recollect that there is such a thing as principle at all! I perfectly agree with the English traveller who asserts that the freedom with which selfish and improper motives and acts are avowed, in our native land, is quite astounding. I do not believe we are much worse than the best of our neighbours, and I do believe that we are much better than the worst of them;

but I know no people who tear away the veil from human infirmities with half the reckless hardihood.

The carriage whirled beneath the beetling battlements of Joux, inclining northward. The vapour began to lift, and there were moments when it rolled upwards until it exposed a thousand feet of gloomy larches, a dark array that left the fancy to fix the limits to their aerial boundary. Half an hour of such varying scenery, during which it was scarcely possible to say which received the most pleasure, the eye or the imagination, was sufficient to persuade us to belong to that class of picturesque hunters, who prefer mists to a bright sun. But I have already given in my adhesion on this point, in the description of Paris, as seen from Montmartre.

Common honesty requires I should add, that we were still in France, a country to whose nature, as you well know, I have been no flatterer. But the greater reputation of the cantons has swallowed up all conflicting claims of this sort, in their own neighbourhood, and few people think, I verily believe, of Mont Blanc, without passing it, incontinently, to the credit of the Swiss. Thus do we claim Niagara as our own, while both the English and French attribute them to the Canadas; the first because they own those provinces, and the last because they once *did* own them.

We soon stopped at an insignificant hamlet, of unexceptionable neatness, and even of picturesque beauty, and *still* it was France. A gens d'armes

examined the passport, and we proceeded. The postillion pointed to a sort of vista in the larches, which descended from the clouds to the meadows, and gave us the agreeable information, as we came abreast of it, that it separated the two countries. A house stood near the road, for ever since quitting Salins, isolated farm-houses had, more or less, adorned the fields, and this, we were told, stood in France, while its nearest meadow was in Switzerland.

The republic has no custom-houses, nor any import duties, and we passed the frontier on a brisk trot. To render the entrée more agreeable, the sun began to stir the mists, and we had the pleasure of their company without the apprehension of rain.

Although the country had been gradually improving in the picturesque and in neatness for the last eight or ten posts, the change in its appearance now became truly magical. Cottages of admirable forms and of faultless neatness were scattered profusely along the road side, the path itself being narrowed to the width which is exactly suited to good taste. The verdure, in the valley, rivalled the emerald, while the mountains loomed out from behind their curtains of vapour in dark patches of rock and larches. We hear a great deal of the verdure of England; but I have already told you that it is the winter rather than the summer verdure of that country, which occasions surprise. The liveliest verdure of England

does not equal the liveliest verdure of even New York, more especially in the forests; but the imagination can scarce conceive of any vegetation of a purer tint or more even texture, than that of the meadows which covered the entire valley through which we were trotting, and this, too, along a road that absolutely was wanting in nothing to render it both good and beautiful. What a change from the wearying *pavés* of the *routes royales*, their everlasting sameness, and the avenues of dusty elms!

The dwellings were uniformly at some little distance from the highway, and, so tenacious are these mountaineers of their soil, not an inch of naked earth was visible, with the exception of here and there a foot-path that went serpenting from cottage to cottage, through the emerald lawns, in a way to give the whole valley the appearance of a vast extent of pleasure-grounds, laid out with the most admirable simplicity.

The effect of this sudden transition on us all, was like that of passing into a new world. We had never before witnessed such a nature, and to me it really seemed that I had never before seen so faultless an exhibition of art. The horses trotted merrily through this little valley, and, as Byron was wont facetiously to imitate some murderer of English, we followed in their train, absolutely overflowing with "*touzy-mouzy*".

We caught glimpses of the people, which bespoke a population entirely different from the

field-going, brown, and semi-barbarous peasantry of France. The women were quietly seated at the windows, employed in proper female pursuits, instead of trampling in the mud with wooden shoes, or carrying panniers like beasts of burden; and the men appeared to have little to do in the fields beyond trimming the meadows to their beautiful coats of velvet. Husbandry, in these high and moist regions, is principally confined to the wants of the dairy; and the Neufchâtelois are much addicted to the fabrication of watches. Instead of assembling in towns, the labour is carried on in the cottages, and no doubt a great deal of the ease and neatness which so agreeably surprised us, proceeded from this source.

We left this valley by a pass so narrow that there was barely room for the road, between the beetling rock on one side and a dark ravine on the other. Through the latter brawled the little river that was formed by the contributions of the adjoining hills. The Swiss, at the period of the last great invasion, drew an enormous chain across this road, to intercept the artillery and baggage of their enemies, which the French broke, by running the muzzle of a gun against it, while their own light troops kept the riflemen who defended the pass, well occupied. Some of the huge staples still remain imbedded in the stone.

At the point just mentioned, we began to descend, by sharp and steep turns, which carried us down into the celebrated Val Travers. Here

our French postilion took his leave, committing us to the hands of the Swiss, for the next three months.

Although this valley is larger and even more beautiful than that of les Verrières, (the one just passed,) and the habitations are much superior, the neatness and verdure being everywhere the same, I do not think we were as much struck with it as with the latter. We were not taken so completely by surprise, and there had been some abuses committed, in the shape of architectural innovations, with which we could have dispensed. Some, who had visited other lands and returned rich, have dared to introduce colonnades and pediments, among the cottages of larch. A real Swiss cottage is as much adapted to Swiss scenery, as the gothic is suited to the holy and sublime feelings of devotion, and evil be the hour when any inhabitant of these mountains was beset with the ambitious desire of imitating Phidias! We are not guiltless of this pretension ourselves, for there is scarce a shingle village throughout the country, that has not more or less of these classical caricatures, and half the divines seem to think their theology imperfect, unless it can be inculcated beneath a dome that looks like a cracked tea-cup, or from among ill-proportioned pine columns that are rent by the heat of two or three Nott stoves.

The evening was beautiful when we left Val Travers. The mists had joined the clouds, or

were already lost in the void, and the sun was tinging the view with a yellow light that harmonized gloriously with the dark forests and verdant meadows. As the carriage began to ascend a mountain, we all got out and walked at least a mile, enjoying the beauties of such a scene, to the "top of our bent." A solitary pedestrian was toiling his way up the mountain; and, leaving the rest of the party, I joined him, and got into discourse. His "*bon soir, monsieur,*" air, accent, and "*tournure,*" though those of an artisan, were all decidedly French. "*Monsieur* comes from Paris?" after a little familiarity was established between us. "*Oui.*" "*Apparemment, monsieur est Anglais?*" "*Non; Américain.*" "*Ah! Anglo-Américain, n'est ce pas, monsieur?*" glancing his eye back at the group in the rear, most probably to see if they were black. "*Des Etats Unis, mon ami.*" "*C'est un beau pays, là bas?*" "*Ma fois, comme ça; ce n'est pas à comparer avec celui ci, pourtant.*" "*Comment!—monsieur, croit que ceci est beau! moi, je ne le croix pas beau; c'est pittoresque, mais pas beau; a mon idée, un pays comme celui auprès de Dijon est beau; là les champs sont plats, et dignes d'etre cultiver.*" At present, you have a Frenchman's distinction between the *beau* and the *pittoresque.* There was nothing to be said against it, and we changed the discourse, I being obliged tacitly to admit that Neufchâtel is picturesque but not beautiful.

The approach of night compelled the whole of

us to take refuge in the carriage. It soon became very dark, neither moon nor star shedding its light upon us, and we toiled on for an hour, literally without being able to see each other's faces. Every one was convinced that we were travelling amid scenes that would have delighted us, which made the road still more fatiguing, and, in truth, I learned soon after, that we had passed one of the most extraordinary coup d'œils in Europe, in this blind and unsatisfactory manner. I then determined so to measure my *étapes*, as never to go a mile in Switzerland again after dark; a resolution that was faithfully adhered to.

We found we were going down—down—down—until we began to apprehend a return to the lower regions, or to the level from which we had been gradually rising for the last two days, but, in point of fact, we were only descending the last and highest range of the Jura. About nine, the carriage stopped before the principal inn in the town of Neufchâtel.

## LETTER III.

My dear ——,

On rising this morning, we found ourselves again in a new world. Neufchâtel lies on the west side of the lake which gives its name to both the canton and the town, and directly at the base of the eastern range of the Jura, which stretches like a wall along the water and the valley, for the distance of a hundred miles. The town itself, though of no great size, is neat and well placed, having its business parts on the very strand, and its better habitations more retired. Many of the latter cling to the hill-side, and are buried among vineyards. The place is neat, and apparently thrifty.

But the town was scarcely regarded, among the sublime objects that here met us. W—— was the first afoot, and he had not been out of the house five minutes, before he came panting back to hurry us forth to enjoy the view. We followed as fast as we could, and were, indeed, well rewarded for the pains.

The lake, which is some thirty miles in length, by some five or six in width, was, as a matter of course, the nearest object. Our own shore was the wall of the Jura, sufficiently varied by promontories and ravines to be striking. The opposite was an

undulating, but comparatively champaign country, and beyond this rose in grandeur, the entire range of the Oberland distinctly visible for a distance of sixty or eighty miles.

Before this sublime sight, all that we had yet seen, even to the glittering peak of Mont Blanc, sunk into insignificance. It is not easy to convey a sufficiently vivid picture of a view so glorious with the pen, and I hardly know how to set about it; for I am fully aware that however kindly you may be disposed to be satisfied with an imperfect description, it is not easy for one who has actually looked upon it to please himself. You must imagine, therefore, as well as you can, what would be the appearance of frozen snow piled in the heavens to the height of a mile, and stretching twenty leagues across the boundary of an otherwise beautiful view, having its sides shaded by innumerable ravines, or rather valleys, with, here and there, a patch of hoary naked rock, and the upper line of all tossed into peaks, mountain tops, and swelling ridges, like the waves of a colossal ocean. The very *beau idéal* of whiteness is not purer than the congealed element, or chiselled marble better defined.

After all, we had seen nothing, knew nothing of Switzerland, until now! Even what we there beheld was at the distance of some sixty miles, and again I wished for wings, that I might fly towards the glittering piles; Neufchâtel, its lake, its beautiful environs, and all the near view, being unable to

divert the spirit an instant from the study of objects so sublime.

Throughout the day, which was beautiful and a Sunday, we could scarcely keep our eyes from this glorious sight, which seemed to belong as much to heaven as to earth; and, fatigued as we had been by the late journey, if it had not been a day when business could not be done, or my purse had not been exhausted, which rendered an interview with a banker necessary, I fear we might have hurried on to get nearer to the bases of these wonderful Alps. As it was, we gazed at them in the distance, and imagined what would be their appearance when actually among the frozen piles.

I might here commence a tiresome and grave account of Neufchâtel; but it is my intention to save you, as far as possible, from reading common-place accounts of common-place things. There is one peculiarity in regard to this little territory, however, that it may be well enough to mention. Although, to all intents and purposes, one of the twenty-two cantons of the Helvetic Confederation, it is a principality, and the King of Prussia is its prince. This sovereign, therefore, like the King of Great Britain, may be made to wage war on himself. Neufchâtel was formerly an independent state, under the sway of a petty prince, on the failure of whose line, about a century since, it passed, either by consanguinity or selection, (I believe the latter,) to the house of Brandenburgh. Like most of the other small states that surrounded

Switzerland, it had long been an ally of the republic; but, at the peace of 1814, when the country was again remodelled, it was admitted, with others, to the rank of a canton. You are probably aware that an ally was connected by no other tie than a treaty, while the canton formed a part of the confederation, and had a vote in the national diet. There are no more allies, I believe. Napoleon made Marshal Berthier Duke of Neufchâtel, although he was better known by the title of Prince of Wagram. Some of the coin struck during his ephemeral reign is still to be met with.*

The Neufchâtelois speak French, and the canton, like its sisters of Geneva, Vaud, and Valais, may be included among those of a French character; though it is a character greatly modified by the circumstances of situation, government, religion, and pursuits.

On Monday morning, we provided ourselves with maps, and with a copy of Ebel, a work of great utility, though not without errors, and, what is of more importance, still, in Helvetia, with cash. But what book of travels is free from gross faults of this kind? I do not flatter myself that these

* During the convulsive movements of 1831, Neufchâtel formally separated from the Swiss Confederation, and it now makes merely a portion of the Prussian states, though probably in possession, still, of its peculiar immunities. As a canton, it was decidedly aristocratic.

letters will form an exception, while it has been, and shall continue to be, my object to render them as little obnoxious to the charge as circumstances, my own ignorance included, will allow.

After breakfast we left Neufchâtel, to plunge deeper into Switzerland, of which I began to think, after all the beauties of Val Travers, we had, as yet, enjoyed but a distant view. The three horses were attached to the caléche, unicorn, or à la mode de l'Allemagne, and away we trotted, on as fair a day as ever smiled on the creation.

There is a plain of some ten or fifteen leagues in width between the Jura and the Alps, athwart which, in a diagonal line, lay our road. Its surface is broken, though not so much as to render tillage painful, and it is everywhere beautifully sprinkled with wood, and in high order. Through this broad valley flows the Aar, one of the principal rivers of Switzerland. Its course is northward, until it meets the Limmat and the Reuss, when the three pour their waters in a body into the Rhine, at no great distance above Bâsle.

The roads are as fine as possible, and the scenery quite like our own better sort of country scenery, with here and there a memorial of the middle ages, things that are known to us, only, in story. We had a glimpse of the lake of Bienne, and of the island of Rousseau; but the former seemed tame, even compared with its near neighbour of Neufchâtel, which is, by no means, celebrated among the waters of these mountains.

We had a *goûter* at Aarberg, a small town that is surrounded by the Aar; and a league or two beyond it, we passed, or rather passed through, the first Swiss château we had yet seen. The road actually runs through the court of this building, which is an inconsiderable pile, like most Swiss edifices, irregular, and of no architectural pretension. It was formerly the abode of a feudal baron, notwithstanding; nobility, like every other mundane quality, being a comparative and not a positive condition of man. The English gentleman, in every important requisite, is more of a nobleman than half the nobles of the continent, and, were it not for the manner in which gentility is diluted by distances in America, the same would be true of our own gentlemen. But my moral will be more evident, by simply saying that a King of the Pottowattomies and a King of France fill very different stations in life.

We came into the canton of Berne, after the first two leagues of road, and in territory, at least, we were now in the real, ancient Switzerland, Berne being the eighth canton admitted into the Confederation; an event which occurred as far back as the year 1353. It has long been the most important of the sisterhood, by its territories, wealth, and population; taking rank as the second in the ancient order of cantonal precedency. It is the empire-canton of the Confederation, as we of New York so modestly term our own vigorous political sprout, which, a wilderness the

other day, now contains ten times the wealth, twice the cultivated territory, a greater population, and more resources than the whole of even the Helvetia of our own times.

Throughout the day we saw nothing of the Alps; for the inequalities of the ground along which we were travelling, and the great quantity of wood that is scattered over the valley limited the view. But towards evening, on turning the swell of a ridge, the whole range, or rather the whole of its finest parts, stood suddenly before us. We had sensibly lessened the distance between us and the peaks, since quitting Neufchâtel; and, as the sun threw its light from behind us, it was not difficult to distinguish even the icy ravines that furrow their sides. The meeting was quite unexpected, and it occasioned a thrill in my whole system. We had these magnificent objects before us the rest of the way to Berne, from which city also they are in plain view.

The road, as we drew near the town, was lined by side-walks, and avenues of fine trees, and no garden-path could be in better condition. It was a source of complaint, before the revolution, that the Bernese neglected the roads in their conquered territories, while they kept those in their own immediate vicinity in the highest state of repair. Concerning the first part of the charge I shall be mute; but nothing is probably more true than the last.

We entered the gates of this venerable seat of aristocracy in the shape of the Bürgerschaft, just as the sun was setting, and drove to le Faucon, one of its best and most frequented inns, which, like most other best and most frequented inns, was so full as to render us less comfortable than was desirable.

## LETTER IV.

DEAR ———,

BERNE is, assuredly, both a picturesque and a beautiful town. It stands on a peninsula formed by the windings of the Aar, and as this river has dug for itself a channel near, or quite a hundred feet below the surface of the adjoining country, the place appears to lie on an eminence, while, in fact, it is rather lower than the level of most of the great valley of the canton. The history of this city is the history of the canton, and, in some measure, it is the history of the Helvetic Confederation.

The whole of this mountainous region, after the breaking up of the kingdom of Burgundy—not the duchy, which, in comparison, was quite a modern state—this portion of Switzerland fell into the hands of divers great barons, or petty princes, among the most powerful of whom was the house of Hapsbourg. These counts of Hapsbourg were strictly of Swiss origin, and they are the source of the present house of Austria, though through the female line. The country immediately around Berne was granted by this family to one of its great nobles, as an independent sovereignty, about the year 1200, and, for a time, it was known as the

duchy of Zæringue, or Zæringen. This state was of short duration, however, for as early as the thirteenth century, Berne was ruled by its own burghers.

The origin and character of the peculiar aristocracy which so long governed this canton and its dependencies, and which still governs the canton* proper, shall detain you from more agreeable matter but a moment. But I have promised to point out any thing peculiar in the polity of foreign states, and there is very little general knowledge in America of the real condition of Switzerland, if I can judge of my own complete ignorance on the subject, previously to visiting the country.

The city of Berne was built on its present site on account of its facilities for defence. The great depth of the bed of the Aar, and its singular curvature, cause the place to be completely encircled with an admirable natural ditch, with the exception of a neck of land of no great width. A wall thrown across the latter, and the construction of houses of solid stone work along the brow of the precipices that overhang the stream, made it, at a period when the use of artillery was unknown, at once a fortified town.

In the middle ages industry was always fain to take refuge within good substantial walls. The lawlessness of the times, the predatory violence

* This was true in 1828, or at the date of the letter. In 1831, there was a change of system, which will be alluded to in its proper place.

of the barons, whose castles dotted the surface of nearly all Europe, and the manner in which right was made to yield to might, rendered such protection indispensable to the growth of civilization. Berne became one of those cities of refuge to commerce and the arts, though always on a scale suited to the condition and wants of a region like that of Switzerland, and, in the course of half a century, many of the neighbouring nobles, even, were glad to associate themselves with the powerful fraternity of citizens which sprung up behind the defences of the Aar, and to enrol themselves in the list of burghers, in order to find protection against others of their *caste*, who were too strong to be resisted.

Such, in brief, was the origin of the city of Berne. She extended her limits gradually around her walls, this year swallowing up one seigneurie and the next another, until she reached something like her present extent of territory. Not content with these acquisitions, however, she engaged in war, and the country of Vaud, as it was then called, together with that of Argovie, were both conquered, and held as dependencies until the French revolution, when each was rendered independent and made a separate canton. There are sad blots in the escutcheon of liberty, one of her votaries holding men, and another entire states in bondage!

All this time, the government of Berne was in the Bürgerschaft, or the body of the burghers, a

class of citizens who correspond with our own freemen, as they existed before the formation of the present constitution, and when the "freedom of a city" carried with it a political right. As these burghers were comparatively few, and the right was hereditary, the government of the canton is strictly an aristocracy. The rights of the Bürgerschaft may be acquired; they are even openly bought at the present time. Of all the expedients to deposit and maintain power and privileges in the hands of a few, that of these open aristocracies is the most ingenious, and the least likely to give way, if they who reap the benefits know how to moderate their desires. The whole secret is in wisely graduating exactions.

Berne is not rich enough, and has too little call for taxation, to render its aristocracy particularly oppressive. Perhaps it is the most just and the most moderate of all the governments of this form, that have existed in modern times; in short, it may be considered as the very *beau idéal* of exclusion. The laws are said to be well executed, the police is vigorous and equitable, while the sinecures are scarcely worth quarrelling about. It is true that certain families have filled particular employments for ages, but this is a matter of far less importance to the public at large, than to a few ambitious individuals. There is no marine, no army, no representation to create expense, and, on the whole, the public gets on probably quite as well as it can hope to get on, until education shall

be more diffused, and more avenues are opened to personal enterprise. One of the withering effects of exclusion is the dread of inquiry, and thought is shackled to suppress it; a policy that is certain to retard civilization, and to keep the poor uncomfortable. Berne is obnoxious to this charge, in common with every other state that is not really free; for mere lessons in obedience, and homilies on submission and patience, like those taught in the European governments that affect to instruct, are not to be confounded with the liberal education which, by setting the spirit free, arouses the latent energies of character.

Although the political aristocracy of Berne is strictly that of the Burghers, there are several noble families of great antiquity and of long continued political importance in the canton. The Erlachs have been celebrated in the Confederation for five hundred years: an Erlach leading his countrymen against the bands of Austria in the fourteenth century, and an Erlach heading the forces of the canton against the French invasion at the close of the eighteenth. The Swiss nobility are supposed to derive their rank from some of the sovereigns, the emperor in particular; though there are, as usual, one or two, I believe, who pretend to be older than the rest of mankind. There is no more valid objection to a family cherishing recollections like these, than there is in an honest exultation at the greatness of living relatives. I believe, when kept in due bounds, that they serve to make men

better; and God forbid the day should ever arrive in America, when the noble acts of the ancestor shall cease to be the subject of felicitation with the descendant. All that common sense and the most fastidious principles require is care, in fostering such feelings, that what is properly a sentiment, be not converted into a narrow and injurious prejudice. Were I a Swiss, I should be proud of being an Erlach; but, being an Erlach, I should think I acted as best became an Erlach, in giving every one of my fellows an absolute and equal participation in all my political rights. It strikes me, that there is no chivalry in refusing a "clear field and no favour" in politics, as well as in all other honourable competition. Exclusion may muster some arguments on the score of that branch of worldly prudence that is sometimes yclept selfishness, but to set it up like an antique to be admired, on the pedestal of chivalry, is downright delusion! There is not a particle of the truly noble in any thing but fair play. What meaner advantage can be taken in the race of greatness, than to start for the goal in possession of "the track," merely because we have been favoured by the accident of birth.

The notions that are generally entertained of republics are too often vague and untrue, as I fancy you will confess, after reading over this imperfect account of the polity of Berne. You will always remember, however, that this canton no longer holds Vaud and Argovie in vassalage, though

something like such a state of things still exists in Schwytz, the very focus of Helvetic freedom. But liberty, half the time, means no more than national independence. Even among ourselves, what errors are prevalent on the subject of the institutions. Nine out of ten of our worthy Bürgerschaft, more especially of the erudite and accomplished class that comprises the talents, decency, and property of the country, (according to their own account of the matter,) will swear to you that civil and religious liberty are guaranteed by the federal constitution, when, so far as that instrument is concerned, the twenty-four states may establish twenty-four different religions as soon as they please, and the civil liberty of the citizen may be legally put at the disposal of an aristocracy far narrower than that of Berne. I do not know that it would be contrary to the federal constitution, even, for an American state to hold a colony, or a conquered territory. I will put an hypothetical case. The nation is at war. New York raises an army and a fleet, independently of her contributions to the common cause, and takes an island from the enemy. Would not that conquest become hers?—and has not a state all right to regulate its own polity, provided it bears the chameleon-like hue of a republic? Had Massachusetts, for instance, chosen to govern Maine in this manner, what is there in the federal institutions to forbid it?

## LETTER V.

My dear ——,

One hears a great deal of the magnificent mountains of Switzerland, while too little is said of the rare beauty of its pastoral lowlands, if any thing can be called low in a country which lies two thousand feet above the sea. Putting the Alps and the Jura (both of which in fact form prominent objects in most of the views from this canton) entirely out of the question, Berne would be in the centre of one of the most lovely landscapes in Europe. The country is broken, but cultivated like a garden, and so well wooded as to resemble a vast park. There are many hedges too, a feature that is usually wanting in the continental picturesque.

Of the city itself, you have already some idea. Though so well situated for defence before the use of artillery, the place is commanded by heights that would render walls and bastions now of no great use. The latter, therefore, have been wisely converted into public promenades, and most beautiful they are, in every particular. Although the Alps are not necessary to render the views from them pleasant, yet there they are to add a background

of sublimity to a foreground of surpassing loveliness.

The Platteform is the place of most resort, and, though small, and ornamented in the ancient formal style, it is a charming spot. It overhangs the river, on the side of the town next the Oberland, and is supported by a wall more than a hundred feet high. The roofs of the houses in a small suburb, that has crept along the margin of the stream, lie at a dizzy depth beneath, and the incessant murmuring of the Aar, broken and foaming over rocks, ascends as from a cavern. There is a sort of miracle, too, to lend a charm to the spot. A horse is said to have leaped over the battlements, a century or two since, and the rider to have escaped with life!

A little rivulet glides, in a stream large enough to turn a mill, through a sort of trunk, in the middle of the principal street, supplying water for all the purposes of cleanliness, and as a safeguard against fires. This current, which is kept covered with planks, is swift and limpid, and I saw no sufficient reason why its water might not be drunk.

The town abounds in arcades, a good defence against the snow, but they are so low as to be gloomy. It is, I believe, entirely built of stone, much of which is hewn and of a good colour. Altogether, including the lower town, or that which hugs the Aar at the base of the hills, it may contain some seventeen thousand souls.

We have not been idle since our arrival. Al-

though less than a fortnight has passed, we have visited most of the surrounding villages, besides settling ourselves down in a country-house, for the next three months. We are in one of the pretty, little, retired villas that dot the landscape, and at the distance of only half a mile from the town. The sinuous Aar glances between us, but it has burrowed so low in the earth, that no part of it is visible until we stand on its very banks. Graceful footpaths wind among the fields, which are little encumbered with fences or even hedges, and we have roads as narrow and as good as those which one sees in pleasure grounds. The caléche is housed; and in its place, I have hired a good roomy Swiss vehicle, that, at need, will carry us all, without having recourse to either dickey or rumble. Our team is composed of two strong cattle, which have, at least, the virtues of going up hill steadily, and down the declivities with surety, two indispensable requisites in a Swiss team. To these we have added a char-à-banc, for the purpose of running in and out of town with a single horse. The char-à-banc has four low wheels, with a seat placed sideways between them, in such a manner as to allow the traveller to get in or out, while the horse is moving. It will carry three in comfort, though the crab-like movement is disagreeable, until one gets to be accustomed to it.

Our house is about as large as one of the ordinary boxes of Manhattan island. It is built of stone, and, on the whole, is sufficiently comforta-

ble. We found both house and furniture faultlessly neat. The place had just been occupied by the Spanish Minister, but it is the property of the Count Portales of Neufchâtel, who is another Monsieur Tonson as regards landed estate, his name meeting you at every turn. A farm-house is attached to the property, which is in charge of a highly respectable man, who is a favourable specimen of the Swiss yeomanry, and from whom, I am quite willing to confess, I have derived a fund of useful information on the subject of the usages and laws of his country. He is of the Bürgerschaft, and a captain of militia, besides being a moderate aristocrat.

Agriculture in this part of Switzerland is conducted much as it is in other countries, most of the common grains and roots being cultivated; but it is quite a different affair among the mountains, which are necessarily in pasture land or meadows; and large portions of which are the common property of the communes. The word Alp means a mountain pasture. The vast piles of granite which heave their colossal tops into the skies, in this region, are covered with verdure, in despite of the everlasting fields of ice which repose in chill sublimity among their upper valleys; nothing being sweeter or more delicate than their grasses. As the only available means of turning most of these extensive cattle-ranges to profit is through the dairy, every one is permitted to turn on a certain number of cows, and the cheese and butter being

all made in common, by dairy men and dairy women who pass the grazing season among the clouds, it is found necessary to establish each particular cow's character for milk, in order to make a just partition of the yield. This is done periodically, by good judges, the results being duly registered. At the end of the summer the accounts are examined, and each individual receives his proper portion, according to the properties of his beasts.

In some of the mountainous parts of the country, the inhabitants, though, like our own rude borderers, much attached to their wild abodes, fare but badly, as they raise little or no grain, and, notwithstanding their herds, are not particularly rich in meats. The introduction of the potatoe, within the last thirty years, has greatly meliorated their condition, and they are said to be gradually getting the better of a hard fortune. While making one of our little excursions in the neighbourhood last week, I counted one hundred and twenty-nine gleaners in a field of less than six acres. A gens d'armes, who was passing, told us that they came from the Oberland, and that all the grain they consumed was obtained in this manner. He added that seven hundred had passed his beat in a week! These poor people are compelled to substitute potatoes and cheese for bread. The harvest was nearly in, and this conversation took place on the first of August. As the city of Berne itself lies in a valley on a huge mountain, or at an elevation of

some eighteen hundred feet above the sea, this may be considered in pretty good season.

The day after meeting this herd of gleaners, who, by-the-way, were of all ages and both sexes, we went to Hindelbank to see a celebrated monument in the village church. The history of this monument has been often told, but it is so touchingly beautiful that it will bear to be repeated.

Hindelbank is no more than a sequestered and insignificant hamlet, at the distance of two leagues from Berne. The church, also, is positively one of the very smallest and humblest of all the parish churches I remember to have seen in Europe. Small as it is, however, it contains the tomb of the Erlachs, whose principal residence is at a short distance from the village. A German artist, of the name of Nahl, was employed to execute something for this distinguished family, and, while engaged in the work, he took up his residence in the house of the parish priest, whose name was Langhans. The good pastor had been recently married, and tradition hath it,—I hope justly, though I have seen sufficient greatly to distrust the poetry of these irresponsible annals,—that his young wife was eminently beautiful. She died at the birth of her first child, and while the sculptor was yet an inmate of the family. Touched by the sorrow of his host, and inspired by the virtues and beauty of the deceased, Nahl struck out the idea of this monument at a heat, and executed it on the spot, as a homage to friendship and connubial

worth; looking to the Erlachs alone for the vulgar dross through which genius too commonly receives its impulses.

We saw the château of the Erlachs, at a little distance on our right, before reaching the village. It is a house of no great size, but is historical on account of its connexion with this ancient family. The humble little church was readily opened, and we entered, filled with expectation. A large, laboured, and magnificent, but I think tasteless monument, nearly covered one side of the building. It was richly wrought in marbles of different colours, but was confused and meretricious, wanting certainly the simplicity that belongs to every thing of this nature that is truly admirable. I had come to the spot, without particularly attending to the history of the pastor's family, expecting to see a piece of sculpture of rare merit, without exactly knowing what. At that moment I knew nothing of the Erlachs' having a tomb at Hindelbank, and seeing nothing but an exceedingly rustic and plain village church, which was nearly half occupied by this laboured work of art, quite naturally supposed this was the object of our excursion. I was already endeavouring to dissect the confused details, in order to find out the grain of wheat among the heaps of tares, when I was called to the rest of the party.

The sexton had ascended a little platform, at the head of the church, which seemed to be covered with boards thrown loosely on the joists. Raising

one or two of these, the real monument was immediately beneath our eyes. An ordinary flat tombstone, with armorial bearings and inscription, lay at the depth of about six inches below the floor. The idea was that of the grave giving up its dead for judgment. The stone was rent longitudinally in twain, until near the head, where a fragment was so broken as to expose the faces and busts of those who were summoned to the resurrection. The child lies tranquilly on the bosom of its mother, as if its innocence were passive, while the countenance of the latter is beaming with holy joy. One hand is a little raised, as if reverently greeting her Redeemer. The sculpture is equal to the thought, and the artist, probably from the circumstance of moulding the features after death, while he has preserved the beauty of a fine symmetry, has imparted to them a look entirely suited to the mystery of the grave. These things too often savour of conceit; and after the momentary feeling of wonder, into which, perhaps, you have been surprised, is a little abated, the mind turns with greater pleasure to the more severe models of classic taste. Such is not the case with this extraordinary monument. It grows upon you by study, and its rare simplicity is quite as remarkable as the boldness and poetry of the conception. Even the material, perishable and plain as it is, helps to sustain the interest; for it betrays the poverty which could not restrain, though it might trammel genius. There it lay, in noble contrast to the

more ostentatious sorrow of the Erlachs! I would not have changed it into marble if I could, although it is no more than the common friable sand-stone of the adjoining hills, of a grayish-blue colour, and of which half the houses in Berne are constructed.

I have heard it said that the thought of this monument is not original. For this I will not vouch; but I think it has all the appearance of being produced under the pure inspiration of the imagination, quickened by strong and generous feeling. One seldom sees or hears a particularly clever thing, without setting about hunting for the original; ideas which are the most natural and beautiful usually striking us with the force of old acquaintances, on account of their fitness and truth.

There is a monument in Westminster Abbey, in which Death, in the form of a skeleton, appears opening the gates of a tomb, ready to strike his victim. This is a conceit of Roubilliac, and nothing but a conceit. The cumbrous allegory of this work can no more compare with the sublime and evangelical thought of Nahl, than the laboured couplets of Racine can sustain a parallel with the vigorous images of Shakspeare. No work of art—no, not even the Apollo—ever produced so strong an effect on me as this monument, which—because the most exquisite blending of natural sentiment with a supernatural and revealed future—I take to be the most sublime production of its kind, in the world. It was the grave

giving up its dead. The details are sufficiently good.

We passed Hofwyl on our return, venturing near the buildings. Mr. Fellenberg was met on horseback; but having no other business than curiosity, and no letters, I did not conceive myself authorized to intrude. The farm appeared extensive, and under good cultivation; but not better, we thought, than that on which we resided.

Coming from France, we were struck with the physical differences between the French and the Swiss. Among seventy-four whom we met on the road this day, fifty-eight had light hair, or hair that had once been light, though in many cases it had changed to a dark auburn. In France, the proportion would certainly have been the other way. The Bernese are, in truth, Germans; speaking a dialect of the German language, and possessing most of the customs and characteristics of the Tuetonic race. Yet the real Germans are little liked by their brethren!

I have discovered a mountain! Wyndham and his friend Pococke merely discovered a valley, a thing that might well lie concealed from the eye, and into which a man might blunder in the dark; but it has been my better fortune to discover a glacier that is a good deal whiter, and quite as high as the clouds. There is an elevated field near la Lorraine, (our country house,) on which P—— has just been initiated into the mysteries of flying a kite. I have been his instructer; and a few days

since, while engaged in this aerial occupation, with eyes fixed on the heavens, the aforesaid discovery was made. A glittering peak appeared through a vista in the hills, in nearly an eastern direction, distant several points of the compass from the range of the Oberland, which is in plain view from this place towards the south-east. It was to be seen only from one spot, and at that precise spot I happened to turn a glance in the right direction, and the wonder was achieved. I mention the fact, because no one in the vicinity had ever heard of a glacier being visible in that quarter; nor could I gain credit for the discovery, until the unbelievers were confronted by ocular evidence. Judging by the maps and the compass, this peak must be the summit of the Titlis, which lies on the line between the cantons of Unterwalden and Uri, and some fifty miles from Berne. What must be the character of a country, in which the fact of a beautiful glacier like this being visible, is either overlooked by the nearest inhabitants, or has been forgotten! In America, we should travel hundreds of miles to get a glimpse at this single sight.

At Berne, from which city, as well as from every eminence in its vicinity, the entire range of the Oberland lifts its white peaks constantly before the eye, the appearance of a single glacier, more or less, is a matter of no interest. The spectators assembled on the occasion merely nodded assent, quietly admitting that I had really discovered a mountain.

It is at all times a very difficult thing to convey vivid, and, at the same time, accurate impressions of grand scenery by the use of words. When the person to whom the communication is made has seen objects that have a general similarity to those described, the task certainly becomes less difficult, for he who speaks or writes may illustrate his meaning by familiar comparisons; but who in America, that has never left America, can have a just idea of the scenery of this region? A Swiss would readily comprehend a description of vast masses of granite capped with eternal snow, for such objects are constantly before his eyes; but to those who have never looked upon such a magnificent spectacle, written accounts, when they come near their climax, fall as much short of the intention as words are less substantial than things. With a full consciousness of this deficiency in my craft, I shall attempt to give you some notion of the two grandest aspects that the Alps, when seen from this place, assume; for it seems a species of poetical treason to write of Switzerland and be silent on what are certainly two of its most decided sublimities.

One of these appearances is often alluded to, but I do not remember to have ever heard the other mentioned. The first is produced by the setting sun, whose rays, of a cloudless evening, are the parents of hues and changes of a singularly lovely character. For many minutes the lustre of the glacier slowly retires, and is gradually succeeded by a tint

of rose colour, which, falling on so luminous a body, produces a sort of "roseate light;" the whole of the vast range becoming mellowed and subdued to indescribable softness. This appearance gradually increases in intensity, varying on different evenings, however, according to the state of the atmosphere. At the very moment, perhaps, when the eye is resting most eagerly on this extraordinary view, the light vanishes. No scenic change is more sudden than that which follows. All the forms remain unaltered, but so varied in hue, as to look like the ghosts of mountains. You see the same vast range of eternal snow, but you see it ghastly and spectral. You fancy that the spirits of the Alps are ranging themselves before you. Watching the peaks for a few minutes longer, the light slowly departs. The spectres, like the magnified images of the phantasmagoria, grow more and more faint, less and less material, until swallowed in the firmament. What renders all this more thrillingly exquisite is, the circumstance that these changes do not occur until after evening has fallen on the lower world, giving to the whole the air of nature sporting, in the upper regions, with some of her spare and detached materials.

This sight is far from uncommon. It is seen during the summer, at least, in greater or less perfection, as often as twice or thrice a week. The other is much less frequent; for, though a constant spectator when the atmosphere was favourable, it was never my fortune to witness it but twice; and

even on these occasions only one of them is entitled to come within the description I am about to attempt.

It is necessary to tell you that the Aar flows toward Berne in a north-west direction, through a valley of some width, and several leagues in length. To this fact the Bernese are indebted for their view of the Oberland Alps, which stretch themselves exactly across the mouth of the gorge, at the distance of forty miles in an air line. These giants are supported by a row of outposts, any one of which, of itself, would be a spectacle in another country. One in particular, is distinguished by its form, which is that of a cone. It is nearly in a line with the Jung Frau,* the virgin queen of the Oberland. This mountain is called the Niesen. It stands some eight or ten miles in advance of the mighty range, though to the eye, at Berne, all these accessories appear to be tumbled without order, at the very feet of their principals. The height of the Niesen is given by Ebel, at 5584 French, or nearly 6000 English feet, above the lake of Thun, on whose margin it stands; and at 7340 French, or nearly 8000 English feet above the sea. In short, it is rather higher than the highest peak of our own White Mountains. The Jung Frau rises directly behind this mass, rather more than a mile nearer to heaven.

* Jung Frau, or the virgin; (pronounced Yoong Frow.) The mountain is thus called, because it has never been scaled.

The day, on the occasion to which I allude, was clouded, and as a great deal of mist was clinging to all the smaller mountains, the lower atmosphere was much charged with vapour. The cap of the Niesen was quite hid, and a wide streak of watery clouds lay along the whole of the summits of the nearer range, leaving, however, their brown sides misty but visible. In short, the Niesen and its immediate neighbours looked like any other range of noble mountains, whose heads were hid in the clouds. I think the vapour must have caused a good deal of refraction, for above these clouds rose the whole of the Oberland Alps to an altitude which certainly seemed even greater than usual. Every peak and all the majestic formation was perfectly visible, though the whole range appeared to be severed from the earth, and to float in air. The line of communication was veiled, and while all below was watery, or enfeebled by mist, the glaciers threw back the fierce light of the sun with powerful splendour. The separation from the lower world was made the more complete, from the contrast between the sombre hues beneath and the calm but bright magnificence above. One had some difficulty in imagining that the two could be parts of the same orb. The effect of the whole was to create a picture of which I can give no other idea, than by saying it resembled a glimpse, through the windows of heaven, at such a gorgeous but chastened grandeur, as the imagination might conceive to suit the place. There were mo-

ments when the spectral aspect just mentioned, dimmed the lustre of the snows, without injuring their forms, and no language can do justice to the sublimity of the effect. It was impossible to look at them without religious awe; and, irreverent though it may seem, I could hardly persuade myself I was not gazing at some of the sublime mysteries that lie beyond the grave.

A fortnight passed in contemplating such spectacles at the distance of sixteen leagues, has increased the desire to penetrate nearer to the wonders; and it has been determined that as many of our party who are of an age to enjoy the excursion, shall quit this place in a day or two for the Oberland.

We have opened a communication with the keeper of a circulating library, and are devouring all the works on this country that can be had; for to say truth, beyond some vague notions concerning Tell, and a few leading historical facts, the American usually has as crude opinions of Switzerland as the Swiss has of America.

Among other books, I have laid my hands, by accident, on the work of a recent French traveller in the United States. We read little other than English books at home, and are much given to declaiming against English travellers for their unfairness; but, judging from this specimen of Gallic opinion, our ancient allies rate us quite as low as our quondam fellow subjects. A perusal of the work in question has led me to inquire further into the matter, and

I am now studying one or two German writers on the same interesting subject. I must say that, thus far, I find little to feed national vanity, and I begin to fear (what I have suspected ever since the first six months in Europe) that we are under an awkward delusion respecting the manner in which the rest of Christendom regards that civilization touching which we are so sensitive. It is some time since I have made the discovery that "the name of an American is *not* a passport all over Europe," but, on the other hand, that, where it conveys any very distinct notions at all, it usually conveys such as are any thing but flattering or agreeable. Few nations are so much the dupes of oily tongues as our own, and so overwhelming is the force of popular opinion, that the native writers shrink from exposing the truth, lest they should be confounded with the detractors. Then, how few Americans really know any thing of the better opinion of Europe on such a point? I shall pursue the *trail* on which I have fallen, and you will probably hear more of this, before these letters are brought to a close.

## LETTER VI.

MY DEAR ——,

WE left la Lorraine in good season, and travelled along the course of the Aar, over an excellent road, and through a most beautiful country, for two hours and a half, when we arrived at Thun.* The view of the higher Alps was concealed by the formation and proximity of the lower mountains, and the scenery had some resemblance to that of the better parts of England. We saw excellent cattle, substantial farm houses, with projecting roofs and of Swiss architecture, and everywhere an appearance of comfort and abundance. A small country house, near the river, of an exterior and size but little, if any, superior to that we had just left, was pointed out as the abode of the Grand-duchess Anna. This lady is a daughter of the late, and a sister of the present Duke of Saxe Coburg. She is, of course, also, a sister of Prince Leopold of Saxe Coburg. When young, she was married to the Grand-duke Constantine, from whom she was divorced, when she retired to this valley, where

* Or Thoun; pronounced Toon.

she is said to pass her time more tranquilly than while living in the splendour of the imperial court. These accidental rencontres with royalty are of more frequent occurrence in Europe than is commonly believed in America. Members of the reigning families are often met on the high-ways, the present peaceful condition of the world favouring their natural wish to visit countries other than their own.

Thun presented a picturesque appearance as we approached. A small château, built, one might almost fancy, to adorn a landscape, stands on a hill, overlooking the place, and breaking its outline. The houses are clustered together at no great distance from the shores of a lake of the same name, and the Aar, which flows out of it, winds its way among the narrow and thronged streets, like some busy tradesman bustling through a crowd.

We here got the first view of a really Swiss lake. This of Thun is much smaller than that of Neufchâtel, but it has all the characteristics of grand scenery, islands, in general, rather belonging to the beautiful than to the sublime. Promontories, headlands, points, bays, churches, castles, and villages line its shores, the whole being enclosed in a frame of granite that is worthy of belting an ocean.

This being the height of the season, and the Oberland the very heart's core of Switzerland, the town was well filled with travellers. There are always a number of boats in waiting to cross the

lake, and it is usual to take a guide at this point. The first are under regulations, like hackney coaches, the prices being established by law. It is a pity the care of the canton did not extend a little farther, and obtain the model of a good boat, with orders to construct all that are made for the public service on the same plan. Those in use are clumsy, awkward skiffs, that are, by far, too much out of water, and which neither row fast nor make good weather when there is much wind. The Swiss lakes are so deep, and the air is so apt to plunge from the high valleys which surround them, that one frequently encounters waves of sufficient magnitude to make the qualities of a boat a matter of some moment. The flat bottom is well enough, but the upper works are out of all proportion, and more hold of the water is necessary to keep them head to wind in a stiff breeze. The Thun craft have a little table in the centre, under an awning, the passengers being seated in the centre of the boat. This is probably the best arrangement that could be made. Women as well as men row; one of the former obtaining no small notoriety for her pretty face, soon after the late peace, under the name of la belle batelière.

We engaged a guide, ordered a boat, and proceeded. It is the fashion to decry the indifference of manner which one meets in the service of an American inn; but, while I admit that the charge is too often merited, I do not remember a stronger specimen of American nonchalance, than we had

this day of Swiss nonchalance, at the inn of Thun. We were served, it is true, and that is all that can be said. I should tremble for free institutions, if I thought there is any necessary connexion between rudeness and liberty. But Berne republicanism is farther removed from democracy than it is removed from despotism,* and the fault must be imputed, I believe, to the circumstance of the landlord's enjoying a monopoly by his situation and by the absence of enterprise. Monopolies and an absence of enterprise have little in common with real liberty. Our food, with the requisite covers, were brought into the boat, and we took a lunch by the way.

We had to contend with a swift current in the Aar, for the distance of half a mile, after which we got into the lake. The day was fine, the wind fair, and our two oarsmen and one oarswoman, who, by-the-way, was *not* la belle batelière, being full of nerve, if not of skill, we got across the field of blue water with sufficient rapidity. Rudolph, the guide, proved to be an intelligent man of his class, and I believe nothing was lost through his omissions.

The direction of this well known little lake is from the south-east to the north-west, and our course was from the former towards the latter point. Most of the northern shore is a precipitous mountain, though there are spots of sufficient

* This was written in 1828.

breadth to receive a few farms, and, here and there, a rude hamlet. The site of one of the latter, that had been swept away or buried in a land-slip, was shown to us. But a single cottage was saved. We passed another village that is called the Village of Fools; its inhabitants being supposed to be less gifted with brains than their neighbours. To me they had the air of being extremely poor, a calamity which often induces heavier accusations than that of mere folly. Most of the hamlets lie low, near the water's edge, and all of them have a gloomy air that nearly confounds them with the brown rock. They are, however, exquisitely rustic, and admirably suited to their situation.

The southern shore is gayer. A wide valley or two opens on this side, and the mountains are more insulated and distinct. I speak only of the immediate foreground, for, when fairly on the lake of Thun, the whole visible horizon is limited by a view of the minor Alps. One of the most celebrated of the Swiss monuments adorns this side of the lake. It is the castle of Spietz, which is well placed to help the picturesque. It is seen only in the distance, however, the passages being made by the northern shore; but it may be questioned if the traveller loses any thing by the fact. The principal tower of this edifice is said to be as old as the ninth century, and the hold is believed to have been a favourite residence of one of the sovereigns of that kingdom of Burgundy, which once included all the western part of what

is now Switzerland; a kingdom which, to my shame be it said, I never heard named, until the late acquaintance with the circulating library at Berne. Our knowledge is much like the recollections of the aged, who can recall the events of the last few years, and whose memories then take a backward leap to the period of youth. We read of the present, and of that past which relates more immediately to present things, when we make an enormous stride into the annals of the ancients, stepping over the diademed heads of hundreds of sovereigns, of whose empires, even, we scarcely ever make mention. We Americans are exceedingly provoked if an unlucky wight of an European happen to call Massachusetts a town, or Kennebunk a state; and yet how many of us can enumerate the names of the twenty-two cantons of Switzerland, or of the thirty-eight states of Germany, or even of the ten Italian governments? Did you ever hear of such a kingdom as that of Austrasia? I shall confess I never did, until I passed the ruins of a palace of its monarchs, when one could do no less than inquire to whom it had belonged? That those who direct the affairs of Europe are ignorant, and culpably ignorant, of America, is true; for they seem determined to learn nothing unless they can learn that which is in conformity with their own particular prognostics and wishes; but, after making a reasonable allowance for the rapidity of changes among us, for the small *visible* importance of our annals—I

say *visible*, for I believe Christendom, in the end, is to feel the full influence of our facts—and for the necessary poverty of the literature, I do not know that, in reference to those classes to whom intelligence of this sort is usually confined, we have much the advantage of the old hemisphere in this respect. It is true we *do* know English history, while few Englishmen know any thing of our history beyond its leading facts; but, at least, we ought to remember and admit our ignorance as to all the rest of Europe.

I believe the château of Spietz has passed into the family of Erlach. It is truly an appropriate abode for the descendants of such a stock, surrounded, as it is, by a nature as grand, and yet as fair, as the recollections which attach to the venerable name. I sincerely hope that its present possessor is a liberal, (while he is above the cant and hypocrisy of those who are willing to concede rights to their fellow creatures merely that they may be included in the number, and who would willingly, if possible, stop with their own particular class,) as every real gentleman should be.

When about two thirds of the distance across the lake, we caught a glimpse of the peak of the Jung Frau, resting like a silvery mass above the lower range of mountains, which overhung the water in a massive wall of perhaps two thousand feet in height. I know nothing that gives a more vivid, or a more imposing idea of the vast elevation of these glaciers, than to see them in this manner,

out-topping huge mountains, at whose very base, as it were, the eye is looking up at the wondrous pile. The day had become clouded, and we caught this glimpse of the peak at a favourable moment, when, resembling a fragment of another orb, it was throwing back a flood of frozen effulgence; for even the sun's rays seem chilled, when reflected from these masses of eternal snow.

We were three hours in going from Thun to Neuhaus, which, in literal conformity with its name, is but a solitary dwelling. It has a small artificial port, that has been formed by casting stones loosely into the lake in a line nearly parallel with its bank. Behind this little primitive mole lay a crowded fleet of clumsy boats, the crews of which were lounging about the strand, in waiting for passengers. The former, as usual, were of both sexes. One boat, with a freight of English, was coming out of port as we entered. *Chars*, and carriages of a larger size, were in readiness, and, in a few minutes, we were all seated in one of the latter, with orders to push forward to the bases of those mountains, which had so long been tantalizing us with their glories in the distance. I believe the carriages are in some way regulated by the police, for we were transferred from the boat to the vehicle without noise or contention. By eating *en route* one is enabled to get along a great deal faster than would otherwise prove the case, and, aided by the promptitude of the guides, boatmen, and coachmen, a journey through that part of the Oberland

in which there are wheel roads, is very soon effected.

We soon entered and passed the village of Unterséen, which has a thoroughly Swiss, and, consequently, a truly picturesque character. We then inclined to the south, leaving Interlachen on our left, and plunged into a dark gorge. Every step heightened the interest, which resembled that we felt in passing the Jura, though increased by the increasing magnificence of the scenery, and sustained with the freshness of novelty, even after the experience of that exciting day. A noble torrent foamed on our left, while a mountain frowned on the right, in many places within reach of the whip. Every thing seemed appropriate, and on an Alpine scale. In a few miles we came to a point where the valley, or gorge, for it was scarcely more, divided into two parts, one inclining still further to the south, and the other diverging eastwardly. Each had its torrent, and each its wildness and beauty, though the first evidently was of the most savage aspect. We turned into this, ascending gradually, burying ourselves, as we then thought, in the very mysteries of the Alps. We soon caught a view of a thread of spray falling from an immense height into the narrow opening before us, and presently we stopped at the door of a very comfortably looking inn. We were in the celebrated valley of Lauterbrunnen, and such had been the rapidity of our course, so great was the change, and so strangely and wildly picturesque the place, that I

do not remember ever to have felt so strong a sensation of breathless enchantment as at that moment.

Lauterbrunnen is commonly thought to be the most intrinsically Swiss, of all the inhabited valleys of Switzerland. It certainly strikes the novice with more of wonder and delight than any other that I know; but our tastes change and improve in matters of scenery as in other things, and the same objects, seen a second time, and after frequent occasions of comparison, do not always produce the same relative impressions.

We walked to the waterfall, which was the celebrated Staubbach, (Torrent or Fall of Dust,) and at a short distance from the inn. It contained as much water as would turn a large mill, and fell over the face of a stupendous rock, itself an imposing object, seen as it then was by twilight, beetling above the narrow valley. The perpendicular, or lower fall, is said to be eight hundred feet. About a third of the distance, the fluid descends towards the eye in a sort of thick spray; it then seems to be broken into falling mist, until it touches a projection in the mountain, where it resumes the more palpable character of the element, and descends, washing the base of the rock, to the spectator, flowing past him in a limpid current. It is well named, for so ethereal or dust-like is one of its sections, that once or twice it appeared about to sail away like a cloud, in the

duskiness of the evening, on the wings of the wind.

I despair of making you see Lauterbrunnen through the medium of the mind's eye; still you shall have the elements of this remarkable valley, to combine in such a picture as your own imagination can draw.

Standing at the foot of the Staubbach, you have in the near ground a hamlet of truly rustic peculiarities; scanty, but beautifully verdant meadows, a little church, and the inn. The latter is merely for summer use, and, though Swissish in exterior, might be spared from the view. It has three stories, and twelve small windows in front; —too much like a hotel for the picturesque; but it is scarcely observed amid the stupendous objects around it. The valley may possibly be half a mile in width, in an air line, though it does not seem to be nearly so much. One of its sides, that of the Staubbach, is little other than a rampart of ragged rocks; but the other is composed of a sort of verdant *débris*, that admits of herbage, and even of some little cultivation, though still so steep in the main as to require great care in descending. The whole valley, and the whole of this mountain side, are dotted with those perfectly rural objects, châlets, or small dark picturesque barns of larch, such as you have often seen in engravings. I counted one hundred and fifty-eight of them, from the windows of the inn. Towards Interlachen, or in the direction we had come, a huge mountain lay

directly athwart the entrance of the valley, appearing to close it entirely; though we pigmies, by following the torrents, had stolen around its base; and, in the other, or the opposite direction, was one of those awfully mysterious and grand views that are occasionally seen in Switzerland, which present a strange and chaotic assemblage of the sublimest natural objects, thrown together in a way to leave even more to the imagination than is actually presented to the eye.

We walked a mile or two up the valley, in the latter direction. At that hour, dim twilight, it was not difficult to fancy we were approaching a spot which Omnipotence had not yet reduced to order and usefulness. We looked out of our own straitened valley, through a gorge, into a sort of mountain basin, that was formed by the higher Alps. Glaciers bounded the view, and torrents were seen tumbling into the chaos beneath, looking chill and wild. The whole gradually disappeared with the waning light.

At no great distance from the inn, there is a huge mountain-abutment, in the shape of a dark rock, which cannot be less than a thousand or fifteen hundred feet in perpendicular height above the level of the valley. While standing at a window, gazing at this black pile, whose summit was hid in mist, the latter floated away, and there lay the well known peak of the Jung Frau directly behind and over it, glittering gloriously in the sun! The height and proximity of the nearer

rock caused this glimpse to give us a more imposing idea of the virgin glacier than any view of it which we had yet enjoyed.

By-the-way, the long merited name of the Jung Frau is in danger of being lost; for there appears to be more settled designs this season of overcoming her frozen and hitherto unattainable bosom than ever. Several parties of English amateurs have attempted to ascend; but they do little more than follow where the guides lead, and publish magnificent books afterwards. A gentleman of Soleure, however, was said to have got as high as eleven thousand feet the day before our arrival. He was driven back by a snow storm. These several attempts have touched the pride of the chamois hunters, and there is a rumour in the valleys that the Jung Frau will shortly cease to be a Jung Frau at all. The end will show.

The inn was alive at an early hour next morning, and as these Swiss mountain abodes are little more than boxes of larch, they rattle like drums, or rather like our own shingle palaces. We heard the reveillée beaten by the feet of divers busy travellers. By half past 6 A. M. we had breakfasted and were in the saddle. W—— and myself were mounted in the usual manner; but the two ladies were seated sideways, within a low circular support for the back, without saddle horns, and with both feet resting on a narrow board suspended like a stirrup. There was a guide to each of their horses, who were charged with their

safety, and who were to return with the cattle after we should get as far as Meyringen, on the other side of the Great and Little Scheidecks. The road led up the valley as far as the "Torrent of Dust," when it turned and descended to that other torrent, which tumbles through the centre of the valley. The clock struck seven as we passed the church, and, although we were only at the 5th of August, the rays of the sun had not got any lower into this huge ravine than halfway down the Staubbach.

The ascent commenced immediately on quitting the stream; for the surface of the valley is merely the *débris* of mountains, less precipitous than common, and fertilized by time. The path lay directly up the side of the acclivity, and, although it ran in short zig-zags, there were places in which we were not ashamed to cling to the manes. The slightest pull on the rein was certain to produce a dead halt. Two American gentlemen* were descending this very pass a few days later, when one of their horses made a false step, and, rolling heels over head for a great distance, he actually broke his neck. As no one thinks of *descending* without dismounting, the loss of the poor beast was the extent of the damage.

We were forty minutes in climbing to the brow of the first acclivity, where we landed on an inclined plane, dotted with châlets, and carpeted

* Messrs. R—— and L——, of New York.

with a beautiful green sward; or on what is strictly an "Alp." This romantic mountain pasture contained also several inhabited cottages. Our route lay through meadows of short but sweet grasses; and little girls came out to meet us, every ten or fifteen rods, with offerings of roses, cherries on their branches, and strawberries in the leaves; a species of picturesque mendicity, which, while it did not perhaps adorn, did not absolutely disfigure the character of the scenery. I parted with a crown, in batz and half-batz, before we fairly got rid of the pretty little pastoral beggars. These children very uniformly had light hair; fair, oval faces; and not unfrequently dark, sparkling eyes, on which, I am sorry to add, a batz invariably produced a very lively impression. Many had the promise of actual beauty; but he who looked abroad on the gray and frosted piles among which they dwelt, felt it was a beauty doomed to be nipped in the bud.

Lauterbrunnen, seen from this spot, appeared merely a ravine. The river and houses had, as it were, sunk into the earth, and the line of the valley was to be traced only by a wide crevice between the piles in which this celebrated hamlet was confined. The rock over which the Staubbach falls proved to be only the base of a huge mountain, that towered above it to the elevation of a lesser Alp. We traced the windings of the torrent down its steep side for more than a mile, dashing among rocks, or gliding through groves of firs; here a

glancing rapid, and there a brawling brook, until, reaching the margin of the precipice, it leaped off, and was lost, a silvery thread, in the abyss. A great deal of that which we had looked up to with awe the day before, we now looked down upon with surprise, realizing the trite truth, that every thing has two sides.

After gradually ascending for some time among these meadows, the path turned at right angles to its former direction, running nearly parallel to the valley of Lauterbrunnen, and in a direct line for the Jung Frau. The summit of the latter was bright, unclouded, and apparently within a mile. It was only when the eye attempted to detect details that we were made entirely sensible of the deception. We ascended diagonally for an hour, and yet the glittering mass underwent no apparent change of form or distance. The whole of our discoveries were limited to ascertaining that a portion of the real surface was visible among the frozen snow, and that what in the distance had seemed all glacier was, in truth, partly rock.

We soon reached a point where nearly every trace of the valley was lost. Nothing remained but a fissure, across which it seemed easy to hurl a stone, so closely did the opposing piles seem to be incorporated. On the other hand, objects at a distance not only came into view, but appeared to be at our feet. Unterséen, Interlachen, and the Aar were among them, while the side of the mountain in their rear formed the background

of the picture. I can only compare the sensation of command I felt in that elastic air, and at this elevation, to that which one experiences when he is mounted on a horse whose tread and muscle give assurance of uncommon power. I felt as if riding a mountain.

Snow was lying in spots on the opposite hills considerably below us, and on our side of the valley, at no great distance above us. Of course, the exposure had some influence on this feature of the scene. The immense mass of rock, over whose dark top I had caught a view of the Jung Frau the previous evening, now showed its brown head nearly on our own level, forming, truly, no more than the abutment to the tower above, as I have already described it to be.

We were three hours, after gaining the Alp of the pretty beggars, before we reached the châlet of the Wengern, where travellers usually rest. Here we refreshed ourselves with mountain cheer, of which milk, cheese, and bread are the staples.

From this spot the whole summit of the Jung Frau on one side, and that its best, is visible from the commencement of the snow to its peak. The mountain, which had so long been exciting wonder and expectation from a distance, was now directly before us, and we stood gazing at its magnitude, its shining sides, its mysteries which were no longer concealed, and even its naked rocks, with pure delight. Noble neighbours flanked it, and to the right lay one of those awful glens that are

large enough to hold a small canton, in which ice, rocks, ravines, and waterfalls are blended in a confusion that no pen can perfectly describe—a picturesque chaos.

We were separated from what might be called the base of the mountain (you will remember we were nearly, if not quite, seven thousand English feet in the air ourselves) by what appeared to be a hollow of no great width or depth, but which, in fact, would be called a valley in another place. I felt the boyish ambition to cross it, and for the first time to stand on the snow of the Upper Alps. Five minutes of severe exercise convinced me it would cause too much delay, and the attempt was reluctantly abandoned.

A short time before reaching the châlet a sound proceeded from the mountain which was not unlike that produced by the falling of one of our own high trees in the forest, though altogether on a more imposing scale. It came from the glen, already mentioned, which is, in truth, the termination of the valley of Lauterbrunnen, and was accompanied by a long reverberation. This was an avalanche. While at the châlet, on passing along the faces of the three mountains—the Jung Frau, the Munch, and the Eiger—we heard twenty, several of which we saw. These avalanches, as you will readily imagine, are of as many different forms and characters as can be assumed by falling snow under the vicissitudes of the season, and amid the wild formations of the Alps. Sometimes

they are of fresh snow, that has accumulated in huge balls, which come down with their own weight, or are broken off by the oscillations of the air; at other times superior pressure drives them from their seats; the melting of the thaws, and the passage of rills of water produce others. In short, all the causes that can so easily be imagined, combine to force the frozen element from its aeries into the valleys.

Once or twice the sound we heard was like the mutterings of a distant storm, and we tried to fancy it a mountain turning in its lair. A mountain groaning is very expressive.

My eye was fixed on the side of the Jung Frau, when I saw a speck of snow start out of a mass which formed a sort of precipice, leaving a very small hole, not larger in appearance than a beehive. The report came soon after. It was equal to what a horseman's pistol would produce in a good echo. The snow glided downward two or three hundred feet, and lodged. All heard the report, though no one saw this little avalanche but myself. I was in the act of pointing out the spot to my companions, when a quantity of dusty snow shot out of the same little hole, followed by a stream that covered an inclined plane, which seemed to be of the extent of ten or twelve acres. The constant roaring convinced us the affair was not to end here. The stream forced its way through a narrow gorge in the rocks, and reappeared, tumbling perpendicularly two hundred feet more

on another inclined plane. Crossing this, it became hid again; but soon issued by another rocky gorge on a third plane, down which it slid to the verge of the green pastures; for, at this season the grass grows beneath the very drippings of the glaciers.

This was a picturesque avalanche to the eye, though the sound came so direct, that it was like the noise produced by snow falling from a house, differing only in degree. The size of the stream was so much reduced in passing the gorges, that it bore a strong resemblance to the Staubbach, and according to the best estimate I could make, its whole descent was not short of a thousand feet. The hole out of which all this mass of snow issued, and which literally covered acres, did not appear to have more capacity than a large oven! We shook our heads, after examining it, and began to form better estimates of heights and distances among the Alps.

On quitting the châlet we inclined to the left; and soon after turning the point of the Wengern, or rather of the Little Scheideck, we began to descend. Here we got a view of the valley of Grindewald, the object of the day's ride. It lay in a basin of pasture-land, surrounded, of course, by huge mountains, and its broken surface was dotted with cottages and châlets, as indeed was the side of the Great Scheideck opposite to us, up which lay our path for the next day. There was a church, but scarcely a village. We also got a glimpse of

one of the glaciers, or a place where the ice descends from the frozen fields above, through gorges in the Alps, to the level of the inhabited vallies.

The descent was rough, rapid, and not entirely without danger, though very far from being as precipitate as that which leads into the valley of Lauterbrunnen. As a matter of course, one can get neither on nor off a mountain, here, without labour and some hazard; especially females. The guides, however, were very attentive to their charges, and W—— and myself blundered down as well as we could. We trusted to our cattle, usually the wisest thing, and reached the valley in safety.

## LETTER VII.

DEAR ———,

GRINDEWALD has little in common with Lauterbrunnen, with the exception of the rural looking abodes, and picturesque châlets. It did not strike us at first with the wonder and admiration with which we had gazed at its neighbour; though its beauties grew on the eye, and it at least possessed the merit of having a totally distinct character. Its two glaciers alone would suffice to render it a place of resort, had it not other attractions of a high order.

These glaciers have been compared to seas suddenly congealed. The comparison is fanciful, and it may be sufficiently exact for those who, not being familiar with the ocean, have no very distinct notions about its true appearance; but it must not be understood too literally. The surface of a glacier has none of the rolling regularity of billows, though, in places where swift and conflicting currents meet, one does sometimes see the water tossed into little pyramidal waves which do strongly resemble the frozen surface of the glaciers, though they are never on so grand and imposing a scale. Still the favourite comparison is

sufficiently exact to answer all the purposes of poetic description.

Seen from the inn, the glaciers of Grindewald are apt at first to disappoint the traveller. The magnitude of the mountains diminishes the apparent size of all other objects, and it requires practice with these, as with other things, to form a true estimate of their dimensions. Before I had left the place, the very vastness of these immense fields of ice filled me with wonder. In order that you should have accurate ideas of what they are, it will be necessary to explain.

You are to imagine, in the first place, that all Switzerland, with Savoy, and indeed the Tyrol, and other adjoining countries, lies on a huge mountain. They all have their valleys, it is true, but these valleys are more elevated than even the hills of the lower regions: Thus Berne, which lies in a valley, is at the height of eighteen hundred feet above the sea; Interlachen is higher than Berne; and Grindewald, as you approach the Upper Alps, more elevated still. Though this formation is continued to the very highest peaks, which are separated from each other by their valleys, yet, towards the apexes of the great mountains, there is less confusion in the arrangement—the last ascents usually towering many thousand feet in distinct but neighbouring piles, that admit of different names and peculiar features. These highest peaks also run in ranges, and, as a consequence of all, there is a vast upper plain, or a

succession of connected valleys, out of which the summits shoot in a variety of forms—some conical, others more broken, and all sublime—that extends for a hundred miles. These plains or upper valleys are, of course, covered with eternal snow I do not say that it is literally possible to find the extent I have mentioned in one continued field of ice, for valleys break the continuity in some portion of the range, and occasionally a barrier of rock interposes; but it is known that these glaciers are of very great extent. They are frequently traversed, from one inhabited valley to another, and histories of the perils of these journeys have been published, which have the interest of dangerous sea voyages. The snow falls in avalanches, from the peaks, and there is a constant accession to the masses, which, if they do not increase, as certainly do not diminish. There are writers who affirm that the glaciers add to their power by their own cold, and that, in time, without the intervention of some new natural phenomenon, they will eventually extend themselves downward into the valleys that lie on the next level beneath, overcoming vegetation and destroying life. A succession of cold summers might certainly extend the boundaries of the glaciers, but it is scarcely possible that the heat of the sun can be finally overcome in this manner. There must be a limit, somewhere, to the increase of the ice, and it is almost certain that these limits have been attained during the centuries that the present physical formation of Switzerland is known to have

existed. Local circumstances may have induced local changes, but, as a whole, the contest between heat and cold ought to be set down as producing exactly equal effects.

Here and there the ice has forced itself through gorges in the higher peaks, towards the inhabited valleys. These gorges are the natural outlets through which the water that flows from the heat of the sun (for it is not always freezing, even in the higher valleys) finds a passage. The ice is undermined by the currents beneath, and large blocks slide downward, until they reach the end of the inclined plane in the inferior valley, where their descent is necessarily arrested. In the course of time, the piles increase until that equilibrium state is attained in which there ceases to be any very material augmentation or lessening of the masses. In this manner the glaciers of Grindewald have had their origin. Their terminations are sudden, presenting walls of ice, twenty or thirty feet high, out of which gush torrents full grown at the birth. The meadows are verdant to the very edge of the ice, and we gathered strawberries within a few yards of it.

The distance from the lower end of the lower glacier, (they are called the upper and lower, from their relative positions in the valley,) to the plain of ice above, may be half a mile, and the width of the gorge through which it finds its way, seems to be less than half that distance.

There formerly stood a small chapel on a point

of rock near the margin of the upper valley, and in the gorge itself, where the chamois hunters and those who attempted to pass to the other side of the great range, could offer up prayers for their safety. This chapel disappeared—for a succession of two or three severe winters could do greater marvels than swallow up a small pile of stones—and (a certain evidence of the manner in which these lower spurs of ice are fed) the bell found its way down to the meadows, and is now exhibited in the church of Grindewald.

It is not an easy matter to walk on the surface of those parts of the glaciers which lie on the inclined planes, or between the gorges and the fields. The fissures between the broken masses are of a depth and width that render it far easier to enter than to get out of them. There is a tradition, however, of a hunter who fell into one, and who effected his escape, with a broken limb I believe, through the vaults which are formed by the passage of the water beneath. The thing seems possible, but the odds must be greatly against its safe achievement.

We found at Grindewald another fir house, of the drum-head tightness and sound. The fare was reasonably good, and the beds clean. Here we had a specimen of mountain music, a choir of Grindewald damsels frequenting the inn for the entertainment of travellers. They sung in German—mountain German too—and in good time, if not with good taste. The notes were wild, the throats

powerful, the chords not bad, and the words detestable, without alluding to their meaning, however, for of that we knew nothing.

We asked for the *Ranz des Vaches*, as a matter of course, and now learned, for the first time, that there are nearly as many songs and airs which go by that name, as there are valleys in Switzerland. Grindewald has its own *Ranz des Vaches*, and with that we were favoured. I like it less than some of the others since heard.

We have had a glorious spectacle this evening, in the Eiger, partly covered with mist. Mist—mist—mist;—give me mist, for scenery. Natural objects are as much aided by a little of their obscurity and indistinctness as the moral beauties of man are magnified by abstaining from a too impertinent investigation. I have met with views in which curiosity was so far whetted as to cause me to desire the veil might be altogether removed; but I scarce remember one over which I did not wish it partially drawn again after the eye had been fully satisfied. A strong sunlight is less displeasing in low latitudes and warm climates, where the luxury of the atmosphere accords with its heated glow; but in high latitudes, or in elevated places, it is too apt to give a bald and meagre appearance to the rocks and pastures. For such places, there is nothing like a partial covering of vapour.

The guide met us the following morning with an ominous shake of the head. The established barometer of Grindewald, or, the Wet-

terhorn,* had its top concealed in clouds. This was a certain token of rain, an event that seemed likely enough to occur, as the whole firmament had a most sinister and watery look. Notwithstanding the omens, however, we were all in the saddle by six, on our way to the next celebrated valley of the Oberland, or that of Meyringen.

We made a little *détour*, to visit the upper glacier. It is smaller and less broken than the lower, but has the same general features. The ascent commenced soon after quitting this spot, and our progress was cheered by some glimpses of the sun.

In accompanying us along these mountain paths, you are not to suppose we are toiling through vulgar roads, with bridges, and ditches, and ruts, and all the other attendants of a highway. So far from this, we are often moving on the turf; or, if there is a beaten path, as is most commonly the case, it must be remembered that it winds prettily through pasture land, and meadows, and not unfrequently among flowers, which are singularly delicate in these high regions. A broom with its handle stuck in the earth, is a sign that a field must not be crossed; and a rail with one end laid on the ground, and the other next the path placed in a crotch, is a hint not to diverge from the proper route. Even these admonishing marks occur only in particular places, to protect a meadow, shorn like velvet perhaps; at all other times the sole

* Weather-peak.

motive to keep the track being the certainty it is the shortest way. Fences there are none, or next to none; for a few imperfect barriers are occasionally seen in the valleys.

The ascent of the Great Scheideck is not at all difficult, though long and high. In about an hour after quitting the inn we reached a spot that commanded a view of the plains of ice above the upper glacier, and behind the Eiger, the Mettenberg, and the Wetterhorn, or of those boundless frozen fields so lately mentioned. It was a glorious glimpse, and it contrasted strangely with other portions of the picture. By looking down into the valley, and excluding the sight of the mountain, all was placid, verdant, and rural. The imagination could scarcely form images which, of themselves, presented stronger affinity to our ideas of rustic repose, simplicity, and peace. To be sure, it was necessary to forget that the Corydons and Floras of the vale were speculating on the picturesque, and that the whole district was in the market of admiration; but so very beautiful is the scene, that it was not difficult to draw the veil before this enemy of the romantic. By turning the head a little, every thing like life, or vegetation, or the rural was shut out, and the eye rested on a waste of snow that transported us at once to the remotest regions of the globe. The edges of the glacier were exposed. Those which we saw could not be less than a hundred feet in thickness. In some places they are said to be of three hundred, or even of much

greater depth. An enormous bird was sailing at a vast height over the chill and silent fields of ice, and we tried to fancy it a lämmergeyer.

The pass of the Great Scheideck is not quite as high as that of the Little Scheideck, though by the time we had reached the chalet we were again nearly seven thousand feet in the air. It is broader, and obtains its name by the greater expanse of its bosom. We made a close acquaintance with the Wetterhorn, while ascending, it being our nearest mountain. It did not improve in its barometrical symptoms, and shortly after quitting the chalet its prognostics were realized, by the commencement of rain. Degenerated mist ceases to aid the picturesque. We were driven to our cloaks and umbrellas, and all sense of sublimity was lost in downright discomfort. Our feelings had become so *blasés* that we could not rouse sufficient *touzy-mouzy* to again enjoy a soaking. We reached the inn, whence travellers diverge to the celebrated glacier of Rosenlaui, wet, fagged, and glad to be housed.

Warm fires—it was the 6th of August—refreshments, and dry clothes, put everybody in good humour again. But the relentless rain would not admit of our going to the glacier. After several hours detention we were compelled to make the most of the time in order to reach Meyringen before night-fall.

When we left the inn (another mountain-house that is closed in winter) the rain had ceased, and

the delightful mists had come out again, like boys to play, rising along the sides of the mountains, and rolling like billows out of every glen. It appeared, too, as if the recent rain had set all the Swiss jets d'eau in motion, for little cascades were shooting out of fifty caverns. Some of these falls were, beyond a question, permanent, as their streams were larger than that of the Staubbach, nor were their descents much less. You will understand how easy it is to have a cascade in Switzerland, when you remember that vast bodies of snow lie eternally on the mountains, at an elevation which does not preclude melting in summer; and that the water is compelled to find its way down rocky precipices, some two or three thousand feet, in the best way it can. A perpendicular fall of a hundred fathoms is, consequently, a very common occurrence. We saw six or seven of this height to-day, besides all the little temporary spouts that owed their ephemeral existence to the last rain.

We got a view of the Rosenlaui, at a distance; and, though but a glimpse, we felt satisfied the guide was right when he pronounced it to be better worth seeing than either of the glaciers of Grindewald.

On reaching the chalet we had also obtained a sight of the rampart of rocks which bounds the other side of the valley of Meyringen. It is not unlike the Hudson river palisades, though higher, browner, and alive with cascades. Volumes of

mist were now rising out of the yawning gulf which we could perceive lay between us and this long line of mountains; but no other sign of a valley was visible until we reached its brow, on the side next to Grindewald. W—— was a little in advance as we trotted towards the point, on reaching which he tossed his whip and gave a shout. We knew this to be a sign that his young spirits were strongly excited, and, hurrying on, beheld one of the loveliest landscapes in nature.

Unlike Lauterbrunnen and Grindewald, the valley of Meyringen has a perfectly even surface, resembling a river bottom in America. It is, in truth, a long flat, bounded by nearly perpendicular rocks, and wearing the cultivated appearance of pleasure grounds. The marked difference in cha racter between these three contiguous valleys, forms one of the charms of a visit to the Oberland. The first is a savage glen on a grand scale, relieved by an art admirably adapted to its wildness; the second is pastoral, and of a totally different form; the last rustic, but with an air of association and advancement, though seated in the centre of a na ture that is always grand and stern. There was a village here, and a church, whose conical spire resembled a slender extinguisher. The mist was stirring, softening all, and keeping curiosity alive. The guides looked up to us with honest exultation, as they heard our expressions of delight, while we stood, as it were, suspended over this beautiful view, for the whole lay like a map at our feet; and

Rudolph Wünster complacently reminded us, he had foretold that the best was yet to come. Best it was not of itself; but aided by the mist, we had seen nothing of mere landscape to compare with it, since the glorious day of the Val Travers. The lake of Brientz bounded the view in the direction of Thun.

We had been riding on the banks of a torrent since quitting the inn; a stream which, I believe, flows from the Rosenlaui, receiving tribute, however, from every foaming water-spout by the way. This stream, a clear, brawling, sparkling brook of the largest class, or what would be called a river were it not for its brief course, tumbles suddenly off the last pitch of the mountain (that on which we stood) into the valley. This fall is deservedly one of the most celebrated of Switzerland. It is called the Reichenbach, or the Rich Fall, a name it well deserves, the volume of its water, and its varied aspects, rendering it one of the *richest* cascades, to use the German term, I remember to have seen. We made our way to its margin, the ladies being compelled to use *chaises à porteur*, on account of the wet grass, however, more than on account of the difficulties of the approach.

Quitting the fall, we mounted, and descended slowly to the level of the plain. Here, W—— and myself committed our companions to the care of the guides, and trotted briskly on towards the village, to prepare fires and order supper. We

crossed a spot where a torrent had ravaged the valley, in despite of walls to limit its course, and entered the village.

In half an hour, everybody was comfortably seated around a good fire, looking back with calm satisfaction at the sights, and glories, (not our own, but those of nature,) and fatigues of the day. The men and horses were discharged, and we retired.

Our next movement, at six in the morning, was on wheels, which took us down the valley to Brientz, a village on the shores of the lake. The Aar, which rises among the glaciers, flows past Meyringen, through the lakes of Brientz and Thun, washing the walls of Berne. Although distant more than forty miles from la Lorraine, the sight of this stream rendered some of the party impatient to return to those we had left behind; and we took oars, without delay, for Interlachen, breakfasting in the boat.

We cast longing eyes at the Giesbach, a cascade of singular beauty which falls into the lake, but could not spare the time necessary to visit it. The passage down the blue and glancing Aar to Interlachen was pretty, and helped to hurry us along. Here we took a carriage and drove to Neuhaus without stopping. While in front of the gorge that leads to Lauterbrunnen, we cast curious looks up at the Jung Frau, a magnificent object from the valley. We saw the spot on the Wengern Alp, or Little Scheidech, near the chalet; but it

appeared low and humble amid the icy piles that overshadowed it.

The romantic situation of the village, and a desire for a little tea, a beverage that does not comport with boating, induced us to stop at Unterséen. Nothing can be more romantic than this town, both by situation and in its construction. Here we had more singing girls, who gave us better chords than the choir of Grindewald, and another *Ranz des Vaches.*

The wind was fair, and, in despite of awkward handling and an awkward sail, we made a short run across the Lake of Thun,* whose château, churches, and towers, appeared singularly picturesque as we again entered the Aar. Our own carriage was in waiting, and at six in the evening we alighted at the door of la Lorraine.

This little tour, of rather more than a hundred miles, has been through the very heart of Swiss scenery. The traveller who has not seen it has missed some of the most striking objects of this magnificent country, though he has not yet beheld a moiety of that which is wonderful and worthy to be visited.

The Oberland, though belonging to Berne, has political franchises which place it in a better situation than the other dependencies of the great canton. It contains about 17,000 inhabitants, who in general have a healthy and athletic appearance.

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* Or Thoun.

The women, in particular, are fair and comely, and appear robust, without coarseness. Their voices, like those of all who dwell in cold countries, are soft and musical; and it is said the men make good and faithful followers, and that they never entirely lose the frankness of mountaineers. As a race they differ essentially from all around them, and their origin is ascribed, oddly enough for their situation, to a colony of Swedes! Most of the male attendants of the taverns, however, were not the product of the region, but mere *speculators*, tempted by money to pass the summer in the mountains. These little pecuniary circumstances are sad drawbacks on the picturesque; for in such a country one could wish to meet with nothing that is not indigenous, wine excepted.

## LETTER VIII.

My dear ——,

I gazed back at the Alps, the day succeeding our return, with renewed interest. Places that I now knew to be naked rock seemed white with snow, and, as they covered vast surfaces, a better idea of distances and magnitude was obtained, by observing how completely they were swallowed up in the glittering masses. The peak of the Wengern—not the spot at which we crossed, but a summit a few hundred feet higher—thrust its brown head up from the confused multitude of mountains that were grouped around the footstool of the Jung Frau, and enabled me still better to appreciate the enormous size of the virgin pile. There are peaks which are higher than the Jung Frau; but no mountain near it has the same breadth and sublimity. Indeed, the variety of forms help to make up that sum of glory which is spread before the spectator who sees the range from a distance.

We have been occupied in examining Berne and its environs for the last few days. Among other things, the places of interments have attracted our attention. The principal enclosure is subdivided into spaces for graves, which are marked off by little black posts at the head and foot. Those

which have been used have a larger post in the centre, with a brass plate let into a circular tablet near the top, on which is the inscription. Occasionally the latter is written on paper, enclosed in glass; and sometimes it appears in white paint on the wood. But the brass plates predominate. In one or two instances we saw printed verses within the glass. A very few monuments were of stone. Most of these, however, had the inscriptions engraved on the brass plates, which were let into the stone. Many of the tablets were protected by a little roof à la Suisse, a precaution, absurd and minute as it appeared, that was very necessary for the paper memorials, some of which were already illegible. The centre poles are about five feet high, and are painted white and black, after the manner of a barber's pole! We saw a few faded wreaths, and here and there a grave was ornamented with living roses. Some were complete beds of what is vulgarly called "everlasting," or what the French more prettily term "immortelle." The effect of the whole was odd, and when the evening sun fell athwart the plates, the glittering of the brass caused the array to look like so many armed spectres keeping ward over the silent company beneath. This churchyard arrangement exists within two leagues of the monument of Madame Langhans!

Curiosity, in an idle moment, drew us into the high quarries, where all the building stone is procured for the town. The view was westward,

embracing the opening of Val Travers, the course of the Aar, and much of the fine country in the great valley of that river. During the drive back, I counted the proportion of light haired people again, including all whom we met or passed. The whole number was one hundred and ten. Of these ninety-seven had hair of the different shades that make auburn, from the very light brown to the very fair. None had red hair, and scarcely any black. In France, I still think the proportion would have been the other way.

In another of our excursions, we rode through a valley that might have passed for one in Otsego, were it not for the cottages, and something like a château, on the spur of a mountain. The elevation was not materially greater than that of our own valleys, which reach, as you know, to twelve or thirteen hundred feet. Our base is well enough; but we are sadly deficient in superstructure. There was, notwithstanding, the same general character, even to the stumps. I counted twenty-three labourers in a single hay-field, on that occasion, of whom sixteen were women. This did not savour of Otsego. Notwithstanding their exposure, these women are far better looking than those who do field labour in the lower countries.

We have also seen the Alps by moonlight, for the first time. Their hue changed from the spectral look of twilight, already described, to a faint rose colour. These transitions add greatly to the pleasure of a residence in their neighbourhood.

What shall I say of those unseemly appendages, the goîtres? They are seen by thousands; nay, few people here are absolutely free from swellings in the glands of the throat, and it is quite usual to see them of hideous size. Of course, you know they are attributed to the water and the climate. The water of la Lorraine deposits a fine granular substance that looks like loaf sugar partially dissolved, or like the finest particles of salt. As yet we are all hangible, which is really more than can be said of all the Swiss, unless they are to be suspended by the heels. They tell a pleasant story of a stranger entering a church in the Valais, the very focus of goîtreism, during service. The congregation betrayed improper curiosity; and the pastor, after a sharp reproach for their want of civilization, reminded them it was not the fault of the poor man, "if he had no goître!" They treat the disease lightly here, and say it is not difficult to arrest in the commencement. Were it not for the idea, I am far from certain that *tant soit peu de goître* would not embellish some female throats in our own country.

I must again tell you that drunkenness is by no means an exclusively American vice, as some pretend. Believe me, dear ———, men, women, and children drink too much in various other countries. Here I have seen a good deal of it, even among the females. I met one of the latter staggering drunk in the road, as lately as yesterday. On the whole, I repeat for the eleventh time, that I have come to the conclusion there is less of this degrading

practice at home, among the native population, than in any other country I have yet visited. Certainly much less than there is in either England or France.

We have just had a visit from two old acquaintances—Manhattanese. They tell me a good many of our people are wandering among the mountains, though they are the first we have seen. There is a list of arrivals published daily in Berne; and in one of them I found the name of Captain C——, of the Navy; and that of Mr. O., an old and intimate friend, whom it was vexatious to miss in a strange land. Mr. and Mrs. G——, of New York, are also somewhere in the cantons. Our numbers increase, and with them our abuse; for it is not an uncommon thing to see, written in English in the travellers' books kept by law at all the inns, pasquinades on America, opposite the American names. What a state of feeling it betrays, when a traveller cannot write his name, in compliance with a law of the country in which he happens to be, without calling down upon himself anathemas of this kind! I have a register of twenty-three of these gratuitous injuries. What renders them less excusable, is the fact that they who are guilty of the impropriety would probably think twice before they performed the act in the presence of the party wronged. These intended insults are, consequently, so many registers of their own meanness. Let the truth be said; I have never seen one, unless in the case of an American,

or one that was not written in English! Straws show which way the wind blows.

This disposition, in our kinsmen, to deride and abuse America, is observed and freely commented on by the people of the continent, who are far from holding us themselves in the highest respect. Meinherr W——, the respectable tenant of the farm attached to the house we occupy, laughingly related a little occurrence the other day, which is of a piece with all the rest, though certainly better bred. "It would seem," he said, "que messieurs les Anglais n'aiment pas trop les Américains." I demanded his reasons for thinking so? He then told me an English gentleman had come to the farm, a day or two before, and inquired if he had found la Lorraine? On being answered in the affirmative, he announced himself as a friend of the family which had occupied the house the preceding summer, and expressed a strong desire to see it. He was told it was inhabited, but no doubt it would be shown to him with pleasure. "Oh no doubt," answered the other; "I presume they are English, and I shall have no difficulty in making myself understood." "None in the world; for, although not English, the whole family speak the English language: they are Americans." "Americans!"—and after a moment's hesitation the Englishman beat a retreat. "These Englishmen dislike each other so much as to look the other way when they meet," said my observant and honest *bourgeois*: "this gentleman,

however, *was* willing to encounter a countryman to see the house; but he could not encounter an American."

We were laughing at this little affair, when a neighbour of Meinherr W—— joined us. Continuing the subject, he observed that he had understood there was a strong antipathy to the Germans in America; an antipathy which grew out of the employment of the Hessian and Brunswick troops during the war of the revolution. The idea was entirely new to me, and I would not admit the fact. Our neighbour assured us he had heard many Germans affirm it was so. I told him that "conscience was father to the thought;" that there were few in America who did not know how to distinguish between the governments of Europe and their victims; and that we were so accustomed to see foreigners there was not sufficient jealousy of them for our own good. It was easy to perceive that my statement did not produce conviction.

In reflecting on this matter, I find some causes for the existence of the notion. The expressions "You Hessian!" and "The Hessian!" as terms of reproach, have come down to us from those who probably did detest the Hessians heartily; and, although rarely heard now, they were quite familiar in my boyhood. Then the American of the common class has a most patriotic contempt for all foreigners, believing himself (and generally he has right on his side, so far as his own *caste* is concerned) much superior in intellect and moral

qualities to the European emigrant. When such a state of feeling exists, it is not likely the party most interested will long remain in ignorance of it. By some such means has the German arrived at the conclusion that he is disliked in America, and ignorant of any other reason, he has jumped back to the war of the revolution in search of one. He is not altogether wrong, perhaps, though far from being strictly right.

I have tried the baths which are on the banks of the river above the town. They are entirely constructed of wood, and, though not rich, are clean and sufficiently convenient. I paid twenty cents for a warm bath, covered with linen, with soap, hot towels in profusion, and a hot linen dressing gown, in short, quite à la Française. This is the cheapest bathing I have yet seen. By-the-way, is there such a thing as a good bath to be had, out of private houses, in all America? It has never been my good fortune to meet with one.

While looking at the bears of Berne, to-day, I met Mr. ——, and Lady —— ——. They were sight-hunting, like all their countrymen and countrywomen in summer, he being on his second, and she on her first visit to Switzerland. He has been in America; and we chatted a little about our want of mountains, a failing that the truest Yankee must admit. "I wonder," said our namesake and kinsman, Captain ——, of the Navy, to me one day, "if there is any such thing as grand scenery in the United States?" The idea had occurred to him

suddenly, after his mind's eye had run over the coasts of the Mediterranean, the Indies, and Brazil; and he seemed forcibly struck with our deficiency in this particular. He was right: we have beautiful scenery in abundance, but scarcely any that is grand. The Hudson itself, unrivalled as it is by any European river, possesses in an eminent degree all the characteristics of beauty, with scarcely one that belongs to the magnificent.

We have determined on another excursion, and my next letter shall furnish you with the details.

## LETTER IX.

MY DEAR ——,

WE left la *Lorraine* on Monday, the 25th of August, at eight o'clock in the morning, in our own carriage. The route chosen was that to Soleure, which led us diagonally across the great plain of the Aar to the foot of the Jura. The country and the roads grew less *exclusive* as we receded from the focus of Swiss aristocracy, and, by consequence, rather more common-place.

Near a hamlet called Fraubrunnen, we passed a granite monument erected to commemorate the defeat of a body of English free-lancers, in 1376. Society is materially changed since the English went to Switzerland as mercenaries!

At the distance of about a mile from Soleure, a lad of fifteen made an attempt to stop the carriage, by drawing a rope across the road. After a short parley with the coachman, we were permitted to pass. We had been mistaken for the first of a wedding party, (there being three or four vehicles in sight in the rear,) and we were told that it was a custom for the boys to extort tribute from the *nouveaux mariés* in this manner. A little farther in advance we passed the main body of the young

pirates, who, by way of atonement, gave us a salvo of artillery, from a gun of the size of a horseman's pistol.

We entered Soleure by a bridge across the Aar, and through gates and walls of hewn stone. The town has about 4000 inhabitants; and, as it is eminently of the Romish persuasion, it has a goodly number of churches and convents. One of the former has some pretensions. It is said to be among the best specimens of Swiss architecture; but Swiss architecture, like American, is never particularly imposing, and rarely even beautiful, except in its cottages. The towers, turrets, and walls, however, give the place a picturesque air, that is not out of keeping with the interior, which is rather massive and sombre. They boast of the prison, as keeping the condemned without recourse to chains or drags, while they admit it is not well aired. We have long done all this in America, and aired the prisons in the bargain. I have somewhere heard that there is a dispute on the score of antiquity, between Soleure and Treves, each claiming to be the oldest town in Europe. There are some towers here which are said to be, and which probably are, Roman; for the Romans occupied the whole of this valley, from the lake of Geneva to the Rhine, as their principal highway into Germany, and vestiges of their dominion are by no means uncommon. But Rome itself will not establish the claim of remote antiquity, Treves bearing the pretending inscription of, "before Rome ex-

isted, Treves was." Whichever may be the oldest, Treves was, and is likely to continue to be, by far the most important place. Soleure, however, is not to be despised, as it was once the capital of the kings of Burgundy, of the second race.

Apart from the Roman towers, I saw no great evidences of remote antiquity in Soleure. It had many vestiges of the middle ages, and there was still an air of monastic seclusion in the streets, which was not unsuited to that gloomy period. The lower windows are secured by iron grates; but this is a custom which prevails, more or less, in all the countries of Europe, south of the Rhine.

We left Soleure after our *goûter*. The road now ran parallel to the Jura, and at no great distance from their feet. It was quite level, for we did not quit the plain; but we had fine views of the elevated land on our left. There were several well placed little châteaux on the lower spurs of the mountains, and, here and there, was a ruin. You will understand that we entered the canton of Soleure a short time before reaching its capital. This canton is rigidly Catholic, and our Protestant eyes began to imagine there was a change for the worse in neatness and comfort. Soleure being almost as aristocratic as Berne, as good luck would have it, the fact could not be attributed to democracy. Formerly it was the ne plus ultra of Swiss exclusiveness, but the institutions have been a good deal modified since the French revolution.

A falling tower or two, with a few flanking

walls in the same condition, a little on our left, and as usual at the foot of the mountains, were pointed out to us as the ruins of a hunting seat of King Pepin! Crosses occurred very frequently. We were commenting on this fact—for they had been lost since we quitted France, where they are fast coming in fashion again under the pious Charles—when they suddenly disappeared. Presently we met our old acquaintance, the bear of Berne, stuck upon a post. On inquiry, we found that we were crossing a narrow projection of the great canton, which, like Prussia, is a little apt to thrust its territory in among its neighbours. We soon re-entered Soleure, and met the crosses again, at every turn.

The country people and the houses had scarcely what could be called a Swiss character. They resembled those of Franche Comté more than those of the other parts of Switzerland we had seen. The agriculture, apparently, was not bad; and we now began to see a system of irrigation which is far more perfect than any I have ever yet met with. It is both simple and scientific, and must be eminently beneficial.

The women we passed this afternoon wore a new costume, in which red petticoats, black bodies, and white caps prevailed. But there are as many costumes in even this little canton as there are in Berne. None of them are pretty, except on paper; and yet even the ugliest of them all, worn by the

ugliest woman, helps to make up the sum of national peculiarities; and helps the picturesque, also, unless you happen to be very true sighted, or too near.

We looked into two little chapels, which are or were attached to convents, by the way side, and which are left open for the benefit of the piously disposed. We lived adjoining a convent at Paris; but, notwithstanding the tendencies of the court, and the disposition of Charles X., French religion does not appear to be of the true water, whether inclining to superstition or not. It is worn too much like the clothes, or as a matter of fashion and expediency. Even fanaticism itself commands our respect, when it is hearty. At Paris, I never could perceive any portion of the picturesque which belongs to the Romish rites, nor defer for a moment to their superstitions, which always had more or less of the taint of a popular philosophy. The only thing of the sort that awakened the feelings of reverence and respect, were the calm reproofs of some six or eight grave female faces, among an acquaintance of some six or seven hundred; and the earnest, meek, unwearied self-devotion of the admirable Sœurs de Charité. Here, however, we began to find some of the poetry of this peculiar sect, and those outward signs of devotion, which if they are not make-weights in achieving the great end of existence, serve singularly to adorn a landscape. Hitherto, as memory has carried me back some five-and-twenty

years to Spain, I have been disappointed in this particular; but I now began to entertain strong hopes for Italy.

We had a delightful afternoon. The evening was serene; and the glades among the Jura were soft and inviting. Through one wide opening, we were told, led the road to Basle. Although we travelled with the map before us, uncertain whither to go, we turned away from a town which lay too much in the great world for our present humour, and just as night set in, we entered the dilapidated gates of a small, crowded, and French-looking place called Olten. This town is also said to have the remains of walls built by the Romans. Our day's work was about thirty miles, the whole route being through a perfectly level country.

At six in the morning, we were again on the highway. The Aar was once more crossed by a covered wooden bridge, quite à l'Américaine, though I suspect our own are, in truth, merely à la Suisse, and inclined more to the eastward. Through an opening in the hills, we got a glimpse of Aarberg, a town of Berne, which was once a Roman station, and is now the only fortified place in Switzerland, unless Geneva can be called one. The effect of this perspective glimpse of towers and ramparts was pretty; but less pretty than that we obtained, almost at the same moment, of a little white château, on a spur of the Jura, around and above which my beloved mists were beginning to creep, under the influence of the sun.

The houses are chiefly of stone, rough cast, and still French rather than Swiss; nor are they particularly neat. Crosses and little chapels by the way side constantly occur. We entered one of the latter, which was about sixteen feet long by ten in width, and which contained a goodly company of thirteen images of saints and virgins, besides sundry pictures. Votive offerings, in the shape of arms, hands, noses, and other portions of the human frame, abounded; and, as the whole were manufactured with more zeal than skill, the chapel looked like a coarse and well filled toy-shop, in which the dolls were full grown. I cannot say that all this aided the picturesque, the want of taste more than counterbalancing the magnitude and simplicity of the faith.

At the distance of about a mile from Aarau, we passed a post with the arms of Argovie, a sign that we had entered the next canton. In all other respects, the transition was as quiet as it would have been from one of our own states to another. It is true, we had passports in our pockets; but, the authorities of Berne excepted, no one in Switzerland had asked to see them.

The town of Aarau looked well in the distance, and the suburbs were rather better built than common. Water, in a swift current, runs through the centre of the streets, as at Berne. One provident burgher had turned it to account, by erecting a wheel of six or eight feet in diameter. The power thus obtained was applied to various domestic pur-

poses. Just at the moment we passed, it was turning a coffee-roaster!

We breakfasted at Aarau and proceeded, the town offering nothing peculiar to attract us. There were several châteaux, some in ruins, and others still inhabited, in plain view as we pursued our course. All were prettily placed, and they added greatly to the interest of the day. They were rudely constructed, but were strong in material, and stronger still by position. That of Wildeck was the most conspicuous.

We drove into the court of a large modern building, that stood near the highway, shortly after passing the latter château, and alighted. We were now at the baths of Schinznach, perhaps the most fashionable place of resort of the kind in Switzerland. They stand near the Aar, at the foot of a low mountain called the Wülpelsberg. As our object was this mountain, after ordering a *goûter*, to keep both the landlord and ourselves in good humour, we hastened to ascend it.

A pretty, dark wood of larches and birches covers the hill side. The ascent is by an easy, winding path, which runs, nearly the whole distance, beneath the shade of the trees. A carriage might be driven to the summit, which lies about three hundred feet above the river, on the northern side; but it is a precipitous terrace on the three others. The shape of the little platform on top is that of an irregular quadrangle, of about one hundred feet by two hundred; the greatest extent being from north to

south. At the southern extremity, rises a plain, massive, stone tower, and attached to it is a plainer wing; in which, in fact, the tower is partially buried. The whole is dilapidated, but less so than one might expect. This ruin is about eighty or ninety feet in one direction, and from seventy to eighty in the other. The workmanship is not at all superior to what is seen in our own country breweries, and other similar rustic edifices, but more massive. The interior was quite rude, though one apartment, probably the ancient Ritter Saal, or Knight's Hall, still retained its carved ceiling, the wood of which was black as ink with smoke and time. Two petards are mounted at the windows of an upper chamber, probably relicks of a past age. The family which tenanted the room or two that are still habitable could tell us nothing of their history, nor could the guide.

Such is the castle of Habsbourg, in the nineteenth century, the cradle of the House of Austria, and the architectural predecessor of Schœnbrunnen! The village lies on the declivity, a little to the north-east, near enough for the serfs to be summoned by a conch or a cow bell. I counted eighteen thatched roofs in the hamlet. There is no church.

The ruins of divers holds belonging to this family are seen in Switzerland, castles that it built or acquired with its growing power; but this is understood to be *the* Habsbourg, whence the name and race are derived. The castle was built, accord-

ing to Ebel, in 1020; but the family did not become princely until the succeeding century; if, indeed, until a still later period. Compared with others of their own time and country, the possessors of this hold, in the eleventh century, were doubtless important and civilized personages; compared with those who now live, they would fall far behind ordinary country gentlemen; the relative position with their contemporaries excepted. This relative position, however, makes the scale of worldly grandeur.

You know, of course, that the male line of the family of Habsbourg ceased with Charles VI.; and that by the marriage of his daughter, Maria Theresa, with Francis of Lorraine, the present emperor is, in truth, directly derived from another stock. Still there is probably not a Catholic prince in Europe who is not descended from the ancient owners of, and the dwellers in, this little ruin; and not many, if any, Protestant; for, as Dogberry says, "'fore God, they are both of a tale."

What a chain of events is connected by the historical links between the castle of Habsbourg and the present condition of the Austrian empire!—between the times when the local baron rode forth to a foray, in unscoured armour, and with the other shabby appliances of rustic chivalry about him, and those in which his descendants occupy all the thrones of Europe! The well meaning, but impolitic, Joseph II. is said to have remarked, after steadily looking at this ruin, "truly, we have not

always been great lords." If sovereigns would as steadily look forward with the same reflection, the world would be greatly the gainers. The present princes of Austria are, in general, simple, kind hearted, and upright men, and have probably as little reason to deprecate either view as any of their rank; but they labour, among us freemen, under an opprobrium which more properly belongs to the false policy that has endeavoured to raise up, in the centre of Europe, an empire of discordant materials to counteract the power of Russia and France. Happier would it be for all concerned, did the perversity and prejudices of men admit of a reorganization of territory, and to none more fortunate than to those who are now required equally to rule over the Slave and the Italian, the Roman and the Hun.

The view from the little natural platform, on which the ruin of Habsbourg stands, is extensive. To the north it reaches far beyond the Rhine, into what is called the Black Forest, which, like the New Forest of England, is no longer a forest at all. There are some remains of the former, however; though the name applies to that which was, rather than to that which is. Nearer to the eye is the site of a Roman station that was of more importance than any in Switzerland, where the Aar, and the Limmat, and the Reuss meet, before pouring their united tribute into the Rhine; and three other ruined castles were in view.

Shortly after quitting Schinznach, we passed a

small compactly built town on the Aar, called Bruck, where Zimmerman was born. A little farther was the Roman station named, of which few or no remains are visible. There are, however, the ruins of an abbey of some note, and sundry legends of the middle ages. The place is now called Kœnigsfeld, or Kingsfield, a name derived from the circumstance that one of the emperors was murdered here. We crossed the Reuss, and, inclining eastward, left the plain of the Aar, and entered the valley of the Limmat, which, just at this point, is dwindled into a narrow defile. After penetrating a short distance, we reached Baden; not *the* Baden of which you have heard, but a little town of the same name. The word means baths. Thus the Grand-duke of Baden is the Grand-duke of Baths, and *his* town, Baden-Baden, as it is called to distinguish it from *this* Baden, is the "Baths of Baths."

Baden was also a Roman station, and has some Roman remains. It is still walled; and the ruins of a castle, which are nearly as large as the place itself, cover a rocky eminence that overlooks it in a way to excite admiration. It has its local legends as well as all of them, and we mounted the height to examine it, thinking ourselves well rewarded for the trouble. It had been a citadel, however, rather than a baronial hold. The Congress which made the peace of 1714, or that which succeeded the long war of the Spanish succession, was held at Baden. It met in the town hall, a room of

some size; and we were shown the window at which Prince Eugene proclaimed the result of its labours. The steeple of the church was a queer looking object, covered with tiles of five different colours. This peculiarity reminded us of our own rainbow capital, where the red of the bricks, the green of the blinds, the black of the iron, and the white of the marble, assembled within twenty-five feet by forty, leave nothing more to be desired.*

The baths of this town were used by the Romans, and are still frequented by the people of the country. The place itself contains less than two hundred buildings, squeezed into a narrow defile, that is still more straitened by the Limmat, which glances under the windows of the houses.

We now took a northern direction again, crossing the low mountains which lie between the Limmat and the Rhine. The country no longer seemed Swiss, even the peasantry having a more German and less distinctive air. Hats with a single cock, breeches open at the knees and shining like dark

* The rears of the nine houses which form the terrace of La Fayette Place, New York, and which have marble fronts, are actually painted seven different colours! The writer has enumerated forty-seven different hues on the buildings of this town; hues that are not incorporated with the material, and which are not the fruits of time, but which are chiefly artificial, the offspring of invention, and proofs of an advanced stage of society. Phidias was a mere pretender, or he would have discovered the use of mosaics, in embellishing his statues.

leather, and buttons as large as dollars began to make their appearance.

Evening was drawing near, as, descending the hills, we caught a glimpse of a short reach in the Rhine. The first sensation was that of disappointment, for the stream did not seem to be larger than the Limmat. We soon came to the last inclined plane that descends to the margin of the water, where we entered, by a massive gate, a gloomy village, of a single precipitous street, and made our way down the dusky avenue, to a covered bridge. The hotel was on the other side of the river, but we were refused admittance. Recrossing, and toiling up the ascent, we were again denied. Nothing remained but to try the inn at the bridge once more, or to proceed. This time we were more successful, though compelled to submit to be ill lodged.

Secure of a covering for our heads, I found leisure to examine the localities. The inn stood literally in the stream, or so near it, that the water flowed directly beneath our windows, and we heard its murmurs while seated at table. The river here is not wide ; I should say about six hundred feet ; but it flows with a volume and a majesty of current that render it imposing. The water is blue, but not turbid, being nearer to the tint of the ocean, than to that of the torrents near the glaciers.

A huge tower, a hundred feet high, stands close by the inn. This spot was once occupied by a castle, and I presume there has been a bridge or a

ferry here from time immemorial. The command of such a pass, made a man a baron in the middle ages, for by the aid of tolls and robberies, he was pretty certain to become rich.

I ought to say that we were now in Germany, and in the territories of the Grand-duke of Baden, this portion of the empire being formerly known as Suabia. The town on the Swiss side of the river is called Kaiserstuhl, or Emperor's seat; the good Franz being called a Kaiser, a corruption of Cæsar, in the vernacular of his lieges. Stuhl speaks for itself; being pronounced like our own stool. They who speak English, by a little attention to sounds, can soon acquire a very respectable travelling German.

## LETTER X.

DEAR ———,

THERE is one little canton of the Swiss Confederation that lies altogether on the north of the Rhine. Thither we next proceeded, quitting our hotel of the bridge with the appearance of the sun. The road took us through a level and uninteresting country, in which the signs of Swiss neatness, in a great measure, disappeared. We passed through a point of the canton of Zurich, which also crosses the river, and came to a spot where three posts marked the contiguity of Baden, Zurich, and Schaffhausen, the last being the canton just mentioned. We first entered it at this spot.

Quitting the carriage we went through a wood, and by a winding path, down a declivity, until we reached a point that commanded a view of the river and of the much-talked-of cataract. On its left bank, high, and overhanging the stream, stood a rustic château. On its right were mills and forges. A few well placed rocks, holding a tree or two, broke the current near the middle, the whole volume rushing down a steep rapid, rather than tumbling, for a distance of one or two hundred yards, within which space, the entire descent is

about seventy feet. It is a broken, irregular, and foaming fall, that has more need of rocks and height, than of water, to make it grand. When the Mohawk is full, I think the Cohoos the most imposing of the two, though, at other times, the advantage is altogether with the falls of the Rhine. It is a defect with most great cataracts, that the accessaries are seldom on a scale commensurate with the principal feature. In the case of a deep and swift river, of a mile in width, tumbling perpendicularly one hundred and fifty feet, like the Niagara, the minor faults may be overlooked, in the single stupendous phenomenon ; but in smaller falls, the defect is sooner observed. For this reason, I think, we experience more pleasure in visiting mountain cascades, than in viewing a cataract like this of the Rhine.

A single tower stands on a sandy point below the fall, and is so situated, owing to a bend in the river, as to be nearly in its front. Here a room is fitted up as a camera-obscura, and a beautiful picture is produced, which has the unusual merit of motion. The sound also being on the ear, the illusion is perfect. After all, the real cataract is better than its image. I think we left the falls of the Rhine a little disappointed, although I was the only one of the party who had seen Niagara, and A——, the only one, besides myself, who had ever seen the Cohoos. But we had just been among mountain torrents, and glaciers, and the edge had been taken off our sensations. I remem-

ber to have been more struck by the Cohoos, the first time it was seen, than by Niagara itself. I attribute this unusual effect to the circumstance, that the first was visited when a boy at college, and the second, after having passed years at sea, and having become accustomed to the sight of water in its turbulence. Niagara, however, like every thing truly sublime, grows upon the senses, and, in the end, certainly stands without a rival. Its grandeur overshadows accessaries. Lights and shadows embellish ordinary landscapes, but of what consequence is it to the awful sublimity of an eclipse, that there is a cloud or two, more or less, within the visible horizon?

We walked to the town of Schaffhausen, where we got a late breakfast. Schaffhausen (or Boathouses) stands at what we call a "portage." It was once strongly fortified, for obvious purposes, but a community, instead of a baron, has been the consequence. The little territory has swelled out to the extent of some fifteen miles by eight, with a population of rather more than 20,000 souls. Picot says that, previously to 1798, its government was "*aristo-democratique*," a polity with which I am unacquainted; but which, I presume, means that the aristocrats ruled, while the democrats *thought they* ruled; a state of things, perhaps, more usual than desirable. The whole science of government, in what are called free states, is getting to be reduced to a strife in mistification, in which the great secret is to persuade the governed that he is

in fact the governor; a political hallucination which has the same effect on tax-paying that absolution has on sin.

The town is quaint, crowded, and small. Here we first saw houses painted with designs on the exterior. The ancient walls and towers, from which the place has sadly fallen away, give it, notwithstanding, a very picturesque appearance.

We recrossed the Rhine, by a bridge in the town itself, and entered the canton of Zurich. The road followed the river, keeping the stream in view most of the way, though occasionally it plunged into a wood. After a few miles, however, we came out upon the banks of the stream, which remained in sight all the rest of the day.

This was a delightful afternoon. Convents appeared on the margin of the Rhine, surrounded by vineyards and fine farms, and here and there a ruined castle tottered on the tall cliffs of the opposite shore. We got a view of a fortress on a high rock, called Hohentwiel, in Wurtemburg, for portions of this little kingdom were in sight. It is said to be 2000 feet above the Rhine! One of the convents had a large stone barn, built in the form of a cross. We were now in the canton of Thurgovie. At an inn, opposite to the little town of Stein, the coachman demanded time to feed, leaving us the option of remaining at a tavern, of crossing the bridge to Stein, or of walking ahead. We chose the latter.

Our walk led us six or eight miles along the

shore of the lower lake of Constance, which we reached soon after quitting the inn. It was a fine evening, and we all enjoyed it greatly.

I ought to have sooner said, that we encountered to-day a new species of beggars. They were sturdy, well-dressed young men, who trotted alongside of the carriage with a stubbornness that did as much credit to their legs as to their perseverance. Astonished to find mendicity in such good coats, we refused to give, but without effect, until W——, provoked at seeing a silk handkerchief in one of the extended hats, imitated their action, and began to beg in his turn. This drove off a party of three, who probably set us down as being quite as queer and inexplicable as we thought them. W—— was indignant, and bitterly nicknamed them *amateurs voyageurs;* for they all appeared to be travellers like ourselves, the circumstance of their going on foot being nothing uncommon in Switzerland. Had we understood the usages of the country, we should have felt less surprise.

There is a custom among the young mechanics of Germany, after having served a certain apprenticeship in their own towns, to travel from place to place, and even from country to country, in order to get new notions of their crafts, and to see the world. While on these professional pilgrimages, they are permitted to beg, by general sufferance. Thus W—— was not so far out of the way, in styling them *voyageurs amateurs.*

As the day declined, we came to the village of

Stockhorn, where we were overtaken by the carriage. The road now descended quite to the level of the water, and we had a delightful drive, under some cultivated heights, crowned with châteaux; the lake, its opposite shore, and its islands spreading themselves on the other hand. This fine sheet of water, which is called the Lower Lake, or the Zellersee, from the town of Zell, on its banks, is connected with the upper lake by the Rhine, which flows through them both. The island, which is called Reichenau, is three miles long, and more than one wide; has three villages, and supports sixteen hundred inhabitants. It is covered with vineyards of good repute, and there is a fine looking ruin of a castle at the eastern extremity. We were still gazing at this pleasing object, when the day closed, and for an hour longer we journeyed in the dark. At length we were suddenly stopped by a gate. On looking out, I found that we were passing beneath a solitary tower, that stood in a meadow. This was a frontier, and we were re-entering Germany through a gate! We now began to understand precisely where we were. This gate was within a hundred yards of the spot where John Huss was burned. In a few minutes we passed another gate, in a wall, and entered the city of Constance. Twenty or thirty drummers were beating the tatoo in a wide street, and profiting by the hint, we sought *l'aigle d'or*, and hastened to our beds, after a fatiguing day's work.

The long journey of the preceding day did not

prevent us from rising early, and going out to look at the town. Alas! how changed. Constance has long ceased to be the Constance of gothic times. Its population has dwindled to less than 5000, and there are few remains of the magnificence by which it was adorned, during its celebrated council, which, you may remember, lasted from 141 to 1418; emperors, popes, and potentates of all degrees, being among its members.

The town stands at the foot of the lake, where the Rhine darts out towards the Zellersee. The site is low, and perfectly level, but the position is not without beauties. The view of the lake is perfectly unobstructed, and there is something novel and exciting in finding such a body of water in the interior of Europe, with coasts that belong to different kingdoms. We shrug our shoulders at Shakspeare's ignorance, in representing a shipwreck as occurring on the coast of Bohemia; but I shall take care hereafter, to inquire if the thing may not be possible, for vessels may certainly be wrecked on the coasts of Baden, Wurtemburg, Bavaria, Switzerland, and Austria out of the Mediterranean; all these states touching the lake of Constance. The Bodensee is about forty-five miles in length, and twelve wide: or large enough to drown all the sailors Shakspeare ever imagined.

The walls of the town are insignificant in the way of defence, and the ditch is nearly filled. The houses, as usual, are of stone, rough cast, nor did I

see any that denoted former opulence. There is a garrison of a thousand men, Badenois; the place though south of the Rhine, being in Germany, and subject to the Grand-duke of Baden. The principal street, though short, is very wide.

But our object was the great council. It was held in a building near the water, the lower part of which is now used as a warehouse. The hall above is about two hundred feet long by rather more than one hundred wide. Its roof is upheld by very plain wooden columns. But it was hung with tapestry for the occasion, and a ceiling of carved wood is said to have been introduced. As now seen, the room resembles a vast loft in a warehouse. At one corner is partitioned off a common sized apartment, in which we were shown the chairs used by the emperor and the pope. It is pretended these chairs stand exactly where they did during the council; a queer position certainly, for they are not central as to any thing. They are on a little platform, which is still covered with tapestry, and there is also a canopy of the same workmanship. They have probably been removed for security to this room; greater changes having been made during the last four hundred years. I never see any of these European relics without comparing them with America. Here have these two chairs most probably been kept since a period antecedent to the discovery of our continent! You may remember the orange

tree referred to in a former letter.* The chair of the pope has the place of honour, the right; but it is the smallest and the lowest, though the most highly ornamented. Both are arm-chairs, a distinction of some importance, even now, among princes.

In this room is a model of the cell in which Huss was so long confined. It is made in imitation of stone, though really of wood, and is but three feet wide, by about ten long, and between seven and eight high; narrow lodgings, even for a schismatic. The true cell was in the convent of the Dominicans, a part of which, converted into a manufactory, is still standing on an island in the Rhine, within the limits of the town. The window of the copy was taken from the real cell; it is a sort of loop-hole; the door is also the true door. There were a few bricks on which he had cut some letters. They showed his Bible, too, well filled with annotations. The chair that is said to have been allowed him is a curious specimen of gothic taste, the father of sin being carved on its back, in the shape of a demon's head, with talons, strangely enough relieved by flowers. Perhaps it was intended that the paths of sin should appear filled with flowers. The allegory did not hold good as to Huss, who, though a condemned sinner in the

* The writer saw an orange-tree *in a tub*, at Versailles, in 1826, which bore the date of 1425, or sixty-eight years before the discovery of America!

eyes of his judges, had any thing but a pleasant road to travel.

There were other curious remains in this place, but as every town in Europe has something of the sort, you must excuse my enumerating any more. At the cathedral, an edifice of some grandeur, we were shown the stone on which Huss is said to have stood while receiving his sentence. "Tell Sigismund, I cannot break my faith with God, as he hath broken his faith with me." There is a lively interest about the fate of this sturdy martyr, which has enticed me into details that you may find unreasonable. Among other curiosities that we saw, was a flail well filled with spikes; an appropriate weapon, that had been used by some peasant in his struggles to release himself and his country from bondage. I would rather own that flail than the celebrated armour of Godfrey of Bouillon!

The lake, aided by a calm and lovely day, offered a soft and serene picture. A dozen large craft were floating lazily on its bosom, with their sails disposed in the most picturesque forms. They carry a single square sail, with a great hoist; and this had its yard a-cockbill, that a clue hauled up, and another the canvass in the brails. The effect was exactly that which a painter would most wish to produce. Many of the boats were loaded with lumber from the mountains of the Tyrol, bound seaward. We returned to *l'aigle d'or* to breakfast on the fish of the Bodensee, which proved to be firm and good. At this house, and at Schaff-

hausen, we had no napkins with our meals, an event, on the continent of Europe, to be recorded.

We took our departure before eleven, following the southern shore, through Thurgovie. At first we only saw the lake in the distance, but we approached it in the afternoon, so close as literally to lave the wheels in its waters. A more pleasing drive can scarcely be imagined. A glorious day, the broad expanse of the water, villages on low points, a fine country, and a background that began to resume the characteristics of Switzerland. There was a noble grouping of mountains toward the head of the lake, and, since the previous day, our eyes had been occasionally treated with distant glimpses of snow-clad hills; the first we had seen of them since quitting Berne. For miles this day, we rode through a forest of apple trees. We could see the towns and castles of the other shore, and, in some instances, the smaller towers of schlœsser* in Wurtemburg were quite apparent.

The costume of Thurgovie is very different from any we had yet seen. Two women, whom we met on the road, wore small caps that just covered the crown of the head, of which one was silver, and the other of gold. Of course, these ornaments were rather superficial. We saw oxen harnessed, in all respects, like horses, with collars, breechings, and cruppers. I also observed a peculiarity I do not remember ever to have before seen,

* Castles.

in the wagons, which had all four of the wheels very nearly of the same size.

We entered the canton of St. Gall at a place called Steinach, though we were not yet quite done with Thurgovie, which met us again at Horn, an insulated village of the latter territory. All these changes of political boundaries are quietly effected, no one asking for passports, the guard at the gate of Constance excepted, and custom-house officers are quite unknown.

At Roschach we stopped for an hour. It is a pretty little town, with a port, a brisk trade for this part of the world, and in the midst of most enchanting scenery. Here we saw a Bodensee steamboat, which is a prodigy in its way. It reminded me, in its construction, of some of the schooners that I had seen on Ontario and Erie, when serving on those western waters twenty years ago, which were built in barnyards, hauled to the water by oxen, and which sailed, haw and gee, as it were by instinct. A great number of lazy craft were in the offing; while the high mountain which rose behind the town was arable to its summit, having woods, meadows, houses, and vineyards spread over its broad bosom. Here and there a small château too was seated on the lofty green acclivity.

The drive to Rheineck was beautiful. The children had healthful, smiling faces; and we were evidently getting off the beaten track of travellers, a luxury you cannot appreciate until you visit

a region like Switzerland, and find cockneyisms invading the sanctuary.

All these places are historical in a small way. A ruined castle, not far from Rheineck, was connected with the wars of Appenzell and St. Gall, having been destroyed by the people of the former country. I will not ask you, clever and learned as you are, if you have read any epics on this struggle; but, be candid and answer, did you ever hear of such countries before? They were powers long ere your boasted America was known, and, in a small way certainly, are powers still. In extent, population, and wealth, they are about equal to a New York county. Still, each is one of the twenty-two confederated states of Switzerland, and, as such, entitled to your respect and affection. St. Gall, however, being the sixth canton in extent of territory, and the fourth in population, is rather more important than most of its neighbours. It contains Appenzell in its bosom, the latter being literally embraced by the possessions of the former. It has one hundred and thirty thousand souls, and is rich in manufactures as well as in soil.

Rheineck is the chief town of the Rhinthal, and is well placed on the banks of the river, at no great distance from the spot where it enters the lake, although the latter is not visible. It is a secluded, rural-looking town, though not wanting in industry. The tavern at which we stopped reminded me of one of the old fashioned, quiet, Dutch inns that once existed on the Mohawk; and which were as much

superior to their noisy, tobacco-chewing, whisky-drinking, dirty, Yankee successors, as cleanliness, stability, and sour-crout can be superior to a system in which a day may commence with a settlement, and end with a removal. How loathsome is a state of society that reduces the feelings of neighbourhood, religion, veneration for the past, hopes for the future, country, kindred, and friends, to the level of a speculation! The locusts of Egypt do not bring such a blight on a land, as the passage of a swarm of these restless, soulless, shiftless, and yet for ever *shifting*, creatures, who do not stay long enough in a place to love any thing but themselves, and who invariably treat the best affections as they would deal with a bale of goods, or a drove of cattle on its way to the shambles. These are not the men who, by manly enterprise and bold conceptions, convert the wilderness into a garden, but reptiles that wander in their footsteps, swagger of their own exploits, come and go incessantly, and, like the rolling stone, gather no moss.

We hurried down to the river, and, profiting by the return of a hay-boat, crossed into the Vorarlberg. Our advent in Austria attracted no attention, though a gens d'armes was visible, a custom-house stared us in the face, and the double-headed eagle stood guard on his roost, near the ferry. But there is little in this secluded spot to excite distrust, or alarm cupidity. After taking a short walk in the emperor's dominions, we recrossed to Switzerland unmolested.

Girls were seated under trees tambouring muslin. The ladies examined some of their work, and pronounced it to be common, coarse shawls; but the Swiss wrought muslins have a great reputation. What a thing is civilization! This cotton was probably grown in the wilds of America; was shipped to Rotterdam; thence transported up the long windings of the Rhine to some neighbouring manufactory; is here in the hands of peasant girls beneath the shade of the paternal vine; may return by the path it came, and yet be seen fluttering in our own mountain breezes!

We have reached a new order of architecture; for Switzerland, though so distinct and peculiar, has as great a variety in its ordinary works of art, as in its nature. Like the *Ranz des Vaches*, there is a costume and a distinct style of building for nearly every canton, with the exception of those which lose their peculiarities in their frontier locations. Here, one side of the Rhine is as primitive as the other, and the houses are strikingly quaint. A description of one shall be written, with the model before my eyes in a little inn directly opposite the window.

The building is of three low stories, of which the first is on a level with the ground. The upper or the third story projects four or five feet. It is the principal floor. The lower stories have eight small windows, or are *all* window, with the exception of the corners of the building and the window frames. Each window has six panes of hexagonal

glass. One window is omitted in the centre of the upper story. On this empty space is painted a vine, an emblem of the uses of the house. Between the *rows* of the windows a sort of entablature is marked off in paint, which is filled with pithy German verses, in honour of good cheer and good morals. At one end of this entablature is a bon vivant with his pipe and glass, and at the other a man holding the bridle of an ass, which is drinking, not wine, but water at a fountain. The figures are much smaller than life. Each corner has a pilaster. The back ground is common stucco, and the only colour of the paint that of reddish brick-dust. The lower story is unornamented. This is by no means a good specimen; for we have seen fifty much more elaborate within the last day or two, but never under circumstances that admitted of so close a survey.

This opening of the Rhinthal is a lovely spot. The hills, or rather mountains, appear to be cultivated to their summits, and are dotted with habitations, from the château to the chalet. A great many churches, also, appear picturesquely perched on beautiful sites. Globular or balloon-shaped steeples are getting to be so common that I almost fancy we are farther east than the truth will warrant, some of them actually looking mosque-like.

A raft floated down the Rhine this afternoon, managed by two men. It had come seventy miles. The wonder is, that these waters are so little used. I do not think we have yet seen

twenty boats, skiffs excepted, on this great river. The lake, it is true, was pretty well garnished with canvass, but not in the way it might be, and would be with us. The mistaken policy of giving employment, by means of accidental imperfections, pervades Europe; ay, even England. Why is there no canal around the falls of the Rhine? Parallel to the stream, and moving in its direction, we have passed huge wagons, with six, and eight, and ten horses, buried in harness, with great brass plates, some of which we were told had come from the Tyrol, and might have been going to Bâsle, or possibly to America; for such things do happen. Our inn, besides being so comfortable, and clean, and good, proved also to be unusually cheap. There is a satisfaction, in finding that a grasping cupidity has not penetrated to a spot like this, that has no connexion with the purse.

We departed again, with the dawn. The Rhinthal proved to be a broad valley, and the Rhine itself, at this point, a wide and shallow stream. It no longer flowed with the steady majesty we had so much admired below the lake, though it was much too wide to be termed a torrent; sand banks and beds of gravel occasionally appeared in the centre of the stream, and, except in velocity, its character was altogether changed. Even the colour of the water was more like that of the mountain streams than the cerulean blue of the ocean. From Schaffhausen to Constance, its course had been west; it now flowed north; and for half the dis-

tance between Kaiserstuhl to Schaffhausen its direction had been south. As we were ascending its current, of course our own route was always towards the opposite points of the compass.

The river flows through wide flats, winding from one side of the valley to the other, the low land being covered with maize, hemp, meadows and orchards, and the hill sides with vineyards. Little other grain was visible. The girls were tambouring in the morning air, under the apple trees. They were very generally pretty, and of more delicate forms than the Oberland beauties. Oxen and horses were frequently harnessed side by side; and the wagon wheels continued to be of the same size, or so nearly so as to render the difference nearly imperceptible.

We reached Altstetten to breakfast. It is a quaint, small, and old town, at the foot of the Am Stoss, with many of the painted houses I have described, and wide, wooden arcades in the principal street. Here we encountered a serious difficulty; we could not make ourselves understood. Our German was by no means classical; and English, Italian, and French, were all Hebrew to the good people of the inn. The coachman was from one of the Bernese valleys, and spoke habitually as pure a patois as heart could wish. But even *his* patois would not do; for the patois of the district would own no fellowship with that of this linguist.

In this dilemma I was thrown upon the language of nature. It was not difficult to make the

hostess understand that we wished to eat. Café, as good luck will have it, like "revolution," is a word of general use in these luxurious times. So far, all was well—but "*what* would we eat?" We were sufficiently hungry to eat any thing; but how was one to express "any thing" by signs? It might be interpreted so easily into "every thing!" In this crisis I bethought me of a long neglected art, and crowed like a cock. The shrill scientific strain had hardly reached the ear of the good woman before it was answered by such a peal of laughter as none but village lungs could raïse. W——, who is an admirable mimic, ran after the convulsed party, (two or three girls had been anxiously awaiting the result,) and began quite successfully to cackle like a hen. He was answered by screams that I think must have fairly ascended the Am Stoss. In due time, we had a broiled fowl, an omelette, and boiled eggs; but to the last moment none of the 'women-kind' could look at us without hearty bursts of merriment. To be sure it was droll enough to hear hunger bursting out spontaneously, in these paroxysms of natural eloquence.

We left the inn on foot, the coachman deeming it necessary to hire horses to drag the empty carriage up the mountain; his own finding it work enough to drag themselves after it. It was the steepest ascent I ever encountered on a highway, for so great a distance. The road was very good, but of a matter-of-fact kind that did not condescend to make material sinuosities. We

were more than two hours in walking to the summit. The views were extremely fine from various points of the ascent. The valley of the Rhine was visible far away; Altstetten lay at our feet; in Austria were villages, baths, churches, and châteaux, as usual; and our own mountain side was dotted with cottages. The Vorarlberg presented a sublime grouping of dark, stately mountains, with retiring valleys, up which the eye penetrated leagues. Most of the road we had travelled that morning, lay like a line beneath the Swiss hills. The fields near us were verdant, enclosed, and neat.

Beggars had been a blot on the scenery for the last day or two; nor did it appear that they asked so much from necessity as in the way of speculation, for they often laughed in our faces when refused. We had paused, to rest ourselves, on the side of this mountain, when two or three children came scrambling from a cottage, on the usual errand. The oldest could not have been five, and the youngest was scarcely two years old. The last was an infant of rare beauty; fair, with the eyes of an angel, and perfectly golden hair. She literally wore no covering but an apron. The little cherub plaintively lisped, as she approached, as near as we could understand, "pity, pity." I put a small piece of coin into the extended hand, when she immediately raised the other, with her "pity, pity."*

* Greater acquaintance with the German has since shown me that the little thing merely uttered the common entreaty of "bitte, bitte," or "pray do."

We gave each a trifle, and away they scampered, screaming with delight. The cottage from which these little beggars came was extremely neat, had a comfortable air, and the mother witnessed all that passed from a window. The parent that initiates her daughters thus early in the arts of mercenary entreaty, is in great danger of seeing them in later life the victims of their own practices. Indeed, the reflecting and intelligent Swiss admit that the great influx of strangers is rapidly demoralizing the country, particularly that portion of it which is best formed by nature to foster the higher moral qualities. Men are so constructed that they will turn the picturesque into profit, and even women too.

We met a wagoner driving down one of the steepest pitches of this mountain, on a quick trot, fast asleep in his wagon. One wheel, it is true, was locked; but such is the force of habit that neither the master nor his cattle seemed in the least to mind the descent.

At the summit of the Am Stoss is a small chapel and an inn. The former, I believe, is to commemorate a victory, and the latter is pretty sure to catch all the travellers who ascend. Here, an entirely new scene burst upon us. In the valley most of the objects already mentioned were still visible, while before us lay a prospect unlike any thing we had yet seen.

We were on a sort of elevated plain, or vale, that was sprinkled with cottages of a truly Swiss

aspect, treeless and almost shrubless, and which was shorn as close as scythe could cut, and which it did not seem that the ploughshare had ever stirred. I dare say the latter fact is not so; but I can only compare the whole to the appearance of freshly mown lawns, divided by rustic fences, and dotted with rural habitations, that seemed to be placed without any order in the middle of delicate meadows. So "shaven and shorn" a region I never before witnessed. The distant hills had some wood, it is true; but I question if there were twenty stunted trees in sight in the two or three square leagues of the table land. Comparing the effect of quitting the orchards and fertility of the Rhinthal to all this nakedness, it was like going from a *ballet* to a meeting of the Shakers.

After trotting over an excellent road, through this exquisite nakedness, for two miles, we reached a little ascent. Here we took leave of the Vorarlberg mountains, and caught a near look at Gais, the village which gives its name to the district. I ought to have said that we entered the canton of Appenzell, near the chapel at the summit of the Am Stoss.

Gais lies in one of the little dales, into which the country now became broken. A livelier bit of still life is not often seen. There may be a hundred houses scattered over the lawn-like meadows, with no great attention to regularity. They are of various colours, and the church was

spacious and white. Every thing was as neat as Broek itself. Naked earth was nowhere visible, the narrow road and a few winding footpaths excepted.

No cattle—no trees—no grain—scarcely any shrubs—for miles. Nothing but meadows as closely cut as velvet, houses that looked like large boxes laid carelessly on enormous grass carpets, and a road that was just wide enough, and quite good enough, for a park.

After passing Gais, the country became more broken, and we began to descend. Trees now re-appeared, especially the apple. Here and there was a hedge. At Teufen we saw another remarkable village; the houses being quaint and of various colours, as well as faultlessly neat. In the gable of one I counted six rows of little windows, none much larger than those of a coach. Pea-green, white, and lead colour, were the favourite hues. Tinted Manhattan! how art thou shamed and outdone by this nameless hamlet!

All the cattle were most probably on the upper pastures at this season, the whole region here appearing to be meadow.

After quitting Teufen, we descended rapidly by a wild ravine; but before entering it from one point there was a distant glimpse of the lake of Constance. St. Gall was now re-entered by its own appropriate valley; and we were again transferred into an entirely new region. These sudden transitions are sometimes nearly magical, and always

pleasant, no country offering greater variety of scenery, or a greater variety of artificial objects, in spaces so small. The town of St. Gall was seated in a rich bottom. There was an air of wealth about it which took us by surprise, the suburbs giving every evidence of an extensive industry. The environs abounded with manufacturing establishments, and the green acclivities were covered with fine muslins, bleaching. The place seemed much larger than Constance. It contains, in fact, about ten thousand inhabitants. In short, in this retired valley, we found a town with more of the appearance of business than any we had yet seen in Switzerland, not even excepting Berne. It is a neat little city, surrounded by ancient walls, the ditches of which are converted into gardens.

St. Gall, a town and canton, derives its political existence from a holy hermit of this name, who was a Scot. In the seventh century, Pepin de Héristal, Mayor of the Palace, in France, founded an abbey which was called after the anchorite. This abbey pretended to have been the repository of learning for three centuries, during that long and dark period when kings and nobles sometimes deemed it a disgrace to know how to read and write. Its library was one of the largest extant, and we are said to be indebted to its riches for the works of several of the Latin authors. At a later day, the children of the emperors and of the neighbouring princes were sent here to be educated. Towards the year 1200, however, St.

Gall lost its character for learning, through the cupidity and ambition of its abbots, who had become little territorial sovereigns, wielding the sword on favourable occasions. They have left behind them warlike names, even in this warlike region. The abbots having been raised to the dignity of princes of the empire, this sort of government continued, with the usual quantum of victories, defeats, rebellions, and other pious abominations, until the great political changes of 1798, when their temporal authority was overthrown. The monastery itself was entirely suppressed, by the obstinacy of its abbot, in 1805.

The town of St. Gall was at first a dependency of the abbey, owing its origin to the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. In process of time, its people, serfs of course in that age, purchased their freedom from the monks, obtained franchises from the emperors, and became burghers. They had a bad neighbourhood with the monks, and matters proceeded to such extremities, that about two centuries since they built a high wall between the abbey edifices and the town, most probably to keep the holy celibites at home at night. Previously to this, the burghers had made an alliance with the Swiss cantons, and were in fact, if not by legal right, independent of the abbots. At the close of the seventeenth century, this independence was formally acknowledged by treaty.

I have given you this little outline of clerical history, as curious in itself, and because it contains the

same elements as the history of all the little religious governments of Switzerland, of which formerly there were several, that have left behind them deep impressions of their origin.

We visited the deserted buildings of the abbey, passing through the celebrated wall, which is still standing. The church is large, highly ornamented, and in good repair. It is a cathedral, I believe; at any rate, there is a bishop, who passes his time between this place and the Grisons. The altars of the church are more elaborated than any we have yet seen, not excepting those of Belgium, though wanting in the fine pictures of the latter country. Cherubs, in high relief, abound, the walls looking fairly alive with them. There are pictures, too, but none I believe of much reputation.

All this has taken us by surprise, for we expected neither the evidences of industry, nor those of the ancient magnificence of the monks. We did not enter the deserted monastery.

On leaving St. Gall, we journeyed down the valley, crossing a stupendous bridge, that would have done credit to the environs of Paris, and re-entered Appenzell. The drive for the remainder of the day was through a pastoral and manufacturing district, cattle reappearing, but still no signs of grain. We ascended a little, and reached Herisau, one of the capitals of the canton, just as the day closed. I say, one of the capitals, for several of the Swiss cantons, while they have but a single vote in the national Diet, are subdivided into

entirely distinct governments within themselves. Appenzell is of the number, being divided into the Protestant and Catholic districts, or Rhodes, as they are technically termed. The first is the wealthiest, the most industrious, and the most populous; the latter being purely—I might say eminently—pastoral. Both polities are pure democracies, the people enacting the laws in their original assemblies. This system, however, has some checks, but no balances—you know my theory on the important distinction between the two—in the councils, which exercise a species of veto. In the Protestant Rhode, all males of sixteen have a voice, and in the Catholic, all males of eighteen! This is surpassing our own country, where precocity is rather rife, and boys get to be men with surprising facility. In a community of 50,000 mountaineers, in the centre of Europe, where every musket counts, and where the interests to be controlled are chiefly confined to the pasture and the dairy, this arrangement, however, may do well enough.

Herisau is a neat and striking little town, in which there is a mixture of the ancient and of the modern Swiss architectures. Manufactures aided by a fire have been parents to the latter. You may form some idea of the former, by the following description of our inn, which is strictly of the old school.

We occupy the principal floor, to reach which we have ascended two low flights of steps. Our parlour is seven feet high, twenty long, and fifteen

wide. There are seven windows, all on one side, and each window has six panes of glass. The outside shutters rise, like coach-blinds. That part of the room is covered with curtains; for, luckily, they manufacture cotton here.

I have observed several houses to-day, with six windows in the gables, these gables being usually the front of the building. The arrangement of one of them was as follows. There is a single window in the apex, or garret; then came a row of three, and a row of five. These are all within the roof. A row of seven, and one of nine were in the frame, and a row of eight was in the stone-work of the foundation. The whole height from the ground to the pinnacle of the roof, might have been forty-two or three feet.

The public square of Herisau, like that of Gais, is exceedingly neat and pleasing. Two ruins appeared on hills near the former place, but they promised little.

We did not leave Herisau until after seven, on account of rain. The road led us through an undulating mountain-region, descending, however, on the whole. We soon reached the frontier of this little republic, once more entering its grasping neighbour, St. Gall. Cattle were more numerous, and here and there we saw the signs of grain. The ancient county of Tockembourg (at present in St. Gall) was the next district, and the country ceased to be as peculiar as that lately traversed. It is of another kind, altogether, and yet in almost

any other part of the world, even this valley would be deemed very remarkable.

We met, this morning, four different parties of W——'s *amateur* beggars. All of them had knapsacks stuffed to overflowing, and they were, in general, sleek, well fed, and sturdy. Begging, whatever may be its temporary conveniences, is but a questionable mode of commencing life.

We reached Lichtensteig to breakfast. It is well placed in a very pretty valley, and has a convent, with a château at a little distance. Bleaching grounds and manufactories are seen in all these villages. "Very pretty," too, in Switzerland, you will remember, means something more than common. Indeed, when fairly among the mountains, there is scarcely a spot in the whole country that has not something remarkable, for if you even happen to find yourself in a common-place "bit," nine times in ten the eye may get a distant look at snow-clad summits, and the wild grandeur of the Alps.

The people of the inn manifested unusual interest in us, when they discovered we were Americans. Some of their friends had emigrated. They told us that the Catholics and Protestants of the village use the same building, resorting to it at different hours. A woman here gains about eighteen cents a day by embroidering, and yet the superior wealth and comfort enjoyed in the manufacturing districts, over those which are purely agricultural, is visible at a glance.

The valley of Watwyl is beautiful, the village

very neat and flourishing; and there are, as usual, a convent and a château; charming accessaries to the landscape; especially to those who merely trot through the place. The castle is said to be the only one which still takes rank in the Tockembourg, where formerly there were nineteen. That at Lichtensteig is probably converted into a manufactory, a fate that has befallen half the châteaux of the continent, and is still likely to befall the other half. We have not yet seen a château in the course of construction in all our travels, nor even a great private hotel, in any town! Royal residences alone form exceptions to the rule. Does not this prove that "the age of bargaining is come?"—and yet there are men so blind to the signs of the times, that they wish to see the civil institutions which have come down to us through the oppressions of feudality, renewed even in countries where more modern facts have gotten the ascendancy. Men of this perverted state of feeling exist even in our own land, where potent and majestic facts are dragging opinions after them, wriggling and reluctant, like tails dangling to kites. But selfishness is obliged to wear a mask, and new combinations are becoming necessary to enable the few to make the most of the many.

At the end of the valley of Watwyl, we had to obtain an extra horse for the mountain. While waiting its appearance, melodious female voices were heard, repeating *aves*, on different keys. Presently three women appeared, coming down the road,

and counting their beads, each taking up the prayer in turn. They were on a short pilgrimage to some neighbouring shrine. Such a group added greatly to the charms of a country, which has always appeared to me like a vast natural altar, reared expressly in honour of God.

After toiling up a heavy ascent, and crossing a mountain top, we came to a point on the opposite side, which commanded a view, that I took the pains to describe on the spot, with the top of the carriage for a desk. I give it you, as a specimen of that admixture of the wild and the beautiful that so constantly occurs in Switzerland.

Fields and woods, diversified like a park, covered the broad mountain side, or the foreground of the picture, to the level of the valley. A rich and wide bottom spread itself beneath. The lake of Zurich stretched far away to the right, and on the left, gigantic mountains raised their summits into the regions of eternal snow. Every thing was on a scale of commensurate breadth and sublimity. The opposite side of the valley was a long range of magnificent Alps, holding on their broad breasts hamlets, cottages, and fields, with a noble background of hoary peaks. Fleecy clouds rested here and there, on the masses of verdure, rendering the deep hue of the larches more lustrous and dark. The town of Rapperschwyl, which resembles a quaint ragged castle, was in relief against the lake, and churches, villages, and isolated dwellings were sprinkled profusely on every side, far and

near. In the immediate foreground, a monastery was seated on a high green spur of the mountain, overlooking all these glories with religious calm.

As we descended, the view opened toward the south, and the glen opposite expanded to a deep but broad valley, which contains the canton and town of Glarus. A mountain near it was girt by a belt of vapour, at half its height, the upper edge of the mist being drawn as truly as if cut by a knife. It looked like a halo encircling the moon. Objects constantly grew more and more distinct, until skiffs that at first had been swallowed by distance, assumed the appearance of specks, then of birds, and finally were seen skimming the water. In the end, we distinguished the blades of their oars flashing in the sun.

Here, for the first time, our eyes were greeted with the sight of that famous little state which has given its name to the Confederation, the mountains opposite forming the northern boundary of Schwytz,* which comes to the shores of the lake.

At the foot of the descent, we passed Usnach, a walled village, when the remainder of our day's drive lay on the margin of the water. We hurried on, and stopped at a very good inn, the Paon, just without the gates of Rapperschwyl.

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* Or, Schweitz; or, Schwitz; pronounced Schweitz, as in height.

## LETTER XI.

DEAR ———,

I WALKED into Rapperschwyl alone, next morning, at an early hour. The position and external appearance of this little town are very remarkable. It stands on a small elevated peninsula, and its narrow limits have blended château, towers, churches, houses, and walls together, in a way to give to the whole the air of one huge and quaint edifice. It was formerly the residence of a sovereign count, and the disparity between the warlike and baronial, and the more humble and useful, is very apparent; though both are on a scale suited to the simple habits of mountaineers. Straitened as it is for room, there is a tolerably large square in the centre, most probably an ancient place d'armes.

The lake of Zurich is divided into what are called the upper and lower lakes, the former being much the largest. This division is produced by the peninsula of Rapperschwyl, and by a long tongue of low land which projects halfway across the water, or at least a mile, directly opposite. Ebel had informed me that Leopold of Austria caused a bridge to be made connecting these two points, in 1358; and my eyes had told me, in

descending the mountain the previous evening, that this bridge, or a successor, still existed. I walked through the town, therefore, taking the direction to the water.

A toll was demanded at the end of the bridge. This ancient structure—ancient after the fashion of vineyards, in which the vines are periodically renewed—this ancient structure occupies the second rank in the gradations of bridge building; the first, I take it, being the common American expedient of laying logs on sleepers. It is made of low bents, or framed gallowses, with three rows of sleepers, and planks that are kept in their places by string-pieces well pinned down. With a slight exception, there is no railing, and the whole is only twelve feet wide. The bridge is not straight, but it forms two obtuse angles, having probably been made to vary from the true line on account of the depth of the water. Three hundred yards from the gate are a pier and a small chapel, both of stone; and just at this place is the bit of railing alluded to. At this spot one may be said to take "his departure," and to go forth on the lake. Carriages and wagons do pass this ticklish affair; but one can believe that even a man might not relish it in a gale of wind. As the water is not deep, I presume the waves never actually break over it; still, twelve feet, and no bulwarks, make a narrow beam for a craft a mile long!

I walked to the opposite shore, at my usual gait, in seventeen minutes and a half, and returned in

seventeen; from which I infer that the length of this bridge a little exceeds 5000 feet. Ebel makes it 1800 paces, which is equal to 5400 of our feet, or a little more than a mile. On reaching the southern shore, I first touched the soil of Schwytz.

It was Sunday, the last day of August. The morning was fair, and bland, and calm, as became a Christian Sabbath. The bells were tolling for early mass, in twenty glens, and along the whole village-lined shore. Peasants and their wives were hurrying past, in rustic finery. Most of the men wore flowers and vine-leaves in their hats, from which I inferred they were going to a *fête*, until I discovered a faded *gobea* in my own travelling cap, a piece of pastoral coquetry, for which I was indebted to one of my companions.

Mist lay before all the mountains to the south, rendering them mysterious and mighty. The vapour was just rising along the whole shore of Schwytz, too, unveiling villages, pastures, cottages, and dark forests, as it ascended, and forming exquisite transitions of light and shadow. The whole western side of the lake and valley was already illuminated by the sun, looking bright and cheerful; a gay panorama, that included a thousand objects, beautiful alike in nature and art. The towers of Rapperschwyl were soft and sunny. I counted twelve of them, grouped together, in the small peninsula.

After this little pilgrimage to the cradle of Helvetic liberty, I returned to the Paon, in an excellent

humour to enjoy a breakfast that would have done credit to an American kitchen. In passing, I observed a little artificial port at Rapperschwyl, made of piles. The buildings along the north-west shore of the lake, were now all visible beneath the vapour, and as they blended with the glassy lake, and were snowy white, they looked like a thousand sloops becalmed.

The day was so glorious, and the scenery opened so finely, as the mists ascended, that, impatient to enjoy it, we all left the Paon, on foot, leaving orders for the carriage to follow. A short walk transferred us from the canton of St. Gall to that of Zurich. At the distance of a mile or two, Rapperschwyl showed itself in a new aspect. The houses and all the lower buildings were hid by an intervening swell of the land, and nothing was visible but the old castle, the church,—in Europe the houses of God are always taller than the houses of men,—and the towers of the town walls. The side of the eminence next us was dark and green, lying in shadow, while the outline above was tinged, like a halo, with the rays of the sun. These pictures, if less imposing than the more magnificent glaciers and terrific valleys of the upper Alps, abide more fondly with the memory.

By this time the whole of the Schwytz shore was uncovered, and we saw it, pasture above pasture, cottage climbing over cottage, to the elevation of I know not how many thousand feet. The exquisite transparency of the air, out of which

every thing like vapour appeared to have ascended, enabled us to discern very distant objects with great fidelity, and helped greatly to increase our satisfaction.

All that the lakes of Switzerland need to render them faultlessly beautiful, is islands. They differ so much from each other, as to fill up the sum of all that such landscapes require, with this exception. Here and there an island is met with, it is true, but they are usually insignificant, and not well placed; nor is there anywhere an approach, in the most remote degree, to what may be called a grouping of islands. In this respect, Lake George is as much before all its Swiss competitors, as it is behind most of them in every other particular, that of the transparency of its water excepted. The lake of Zurich is better off than common, however, having an island or two. One of them enjoys the advantage of some historical associations. It is called Ufnau, and it lay directly opposite to us, when about a league from Rapperschwyl, at a spot where the lake is said to be three miles wide. There is a ruined tower on it, but the effect is lost amidst the multitude of finer things.

Our road lay altogether along the lake. The shore is an irregular acclivity, covered with villages, farms, vineyards, orchards, and churches, and even the experience of my worthy friend and connexion, Mr. McAdam, could scarcely produce a better wheel-track. You are to recollect that roads in this country literally help a view, being neither

straight nor wide. About a league from Rapperschwyl, we drove for some distance along a sort of natural terrace, overhanging the water. I can give you no just idea of the charms of the entire scene at this particular spot. The shore of Schwytz, lined with white villages, churches, and cottages, formed the opposite coast. The lake was like a mirror, and some twenty large boats, with high square sails, this with the yard a-cockbill, that with one clew up, another with the halyards not half home, and all looking lubberly and picturesque, were silently stealing along, before a gentle north air that seemed too ethereal to descend to the surface of the water. At this moment, the tones of a dozen mournful bells issued out of the glens of Schwytz, some so faint in distance, as to sound like Æolian harps, reaching the ear at intervals only, borne along in swells by the passing air. The effect of these bells, sending their melancholy notes out of mountains, and across the water, added to the day, and its solemn calm, was to convert the whole scene into a vast and sublime tabernacle!

We passed, at Zolliken, near Zurich, a vineyard, of which it is said there exist records to prove it has borne the vine five hundred years. Like the bridge, you will readily suppose that the materials have been often renewed. One is sometimes startled at the antiquity which renders objects of this sort respectable in Europe. At Küznacht, the words, "Boston, North America," on a tablet let into the outer wall of a church, caught our eyes.

It was an inscription to the memory of a young traveller, who had been drowned in the lake, near this spot. His body had been found and interred here.

We entered Zurich, after a very delightful drive of some eighteen or twenty miles, through ramparts of verdure, which appeared admirably in keeping with the landscape, whatever may be their efficiency in the way of defence. After being dragged back and forth, through narrow and clean streets, but of very unequal surfaces, we found shelter at last in an inn that stood literally on the margin of the port.

The Limmat, the outlet of the lake, glances through the centre of the town, the separate parts of which are connected by bridges wider than the streets. The head of the river is opened like a fan, and across the upper part piles have been driven to designate the limits of the port. As this expedient can have no effect in breaking the waves, and is quite idle in a military sense, unless resorted to for the purposes of revenue, I am ignorant of its uses. It may, however, avail something against floating ice, in the spring. An ancient square tower rises out of the water, in the centre of the little port. It was probably erected for defence, but is now a prison.

Zurich has about 15,000 inhabitants, and is one of the wealthiest and most important of the Swiss towns. Its manufactures are respectable, and the people have an air of ease and comfort. The canton

is the seventh in extent, and the second in population. The latter fact is not difficult to be believed, for I scarcely remember a portion of the earth in which rural habitations more abound. The whole lake-shore is a hamlet. The history of the population of this little country exhibits some remarkable changes. According to Picot, (received authority, I believe,) the canton contained in 1610, 143,990 souls, and in 1634, only 86,621. War and pestilence had wrought the difference. Famine—a scourge America has never known since its earliest days—cut down the people again, between the years 1678 and 1700. This evil has frequently reduced the numbers, not so much by deaths, however, as by compelled emigration. The present population is about 180,000.

The history of Zurich greatly resembles that of Berne. The city ruled the country, and certain families of burghers ruled the city. This system has been modified, however, the French revolution having let in a flood of light upon the rest of Europe. At present, it is the fashion to make all men equal "before the law," as it is called, though all men are very far from being equal in *making* the laws. Formerly, the great were openly exempt from taxes; now *all* are taxed, in name; but as the rich exclusively make the laws, they contrive to arrange the matter in a way to make the poor pay as much as possible. I have told you, for instance, how at Paris a bottle of wine, which costs six sous, pays just the same duty as the bottle which costs six

francs; one being taxed eighty per cent., and the other four per cent. Wine being a necessary in these countries, bread and wine forming the two first articles of consumption with all classes, the policy may be understood. The pretence is, that if wine were cheaper, the labourers would drink too much! I do not say Zurich is obnoxious to this reproach, for the Swiss aristocracies are more mild and just than common, sheer necessity compelling moderation; but it is necessary to admonish you against being deceived by names. All men, let it be understood, therefore, under the new liberalism of Europe, are absolutely equal before the law; each paying just five sous duty, a bottle, on his wine!

Zurich is much less aristocratical than Berne. The people are mostly Protestant; though there are two small districts of Papists. The learning, industry, and general character of this canton have long been respectable; and, without pretending to know more than may be gathered by a mere passer-by, I should say that there is no falling off in the two latter, at least. You will recollect that I have promised to give you little more than can be gleaned in this imperfect manner; for we Americans generally travel through Europe "unknowing and unknown."

In one thing I cannot be mistaken. The water under our windows was as limpid and pure as that of our own Otsego. The lively perch were swimming about, looking as much like the perch at home as one pea is like another. W——, in his *amor*

*patriæ*, cast a line, but in vain, to get a nearer view of them.

I have already told you that we have a Swiss foundation, too, in our own hills; Zurich, Berne, and Geneva, lying all at about the elevation of your native valley. We merely want a granite formation, and superstructures that mount two miles into the air, with the usual accessaries, to be another Switzerland. Until some convulsion of nature produce the change, however, we shall remain most probably just as we are.

## LETTER XII.

My dear ———,

We left Zurich next morning, before breakfast, in a fog, which completely limited the view until we had crossed the Albis, a high and frequented mountain pass, that lies between the lakes of Zurich and Zug. Ebel extols the view; but I am mute. This time my beloved mists had the best of it, practically demonstrating that there is no earthly good without its attendant alloy. We ate an inexcusably poor breakfast on the summit.

In descending, there were some exceedingly pretty glimpses, including the lake and canton of Zug—I say the canton, for the latter is so small, that it comes very well in at a glance. We passed an old convent and entered this little state, the smallest in the Confederation, at the distance of a mile or two from its capital. Its population is less than fifteen thousand, and its size somewhat smaller than that of a common New York township, containing about twenty-five square miles. Even this little region, one of the oldest cantons, had the aristocratic form of government, until the French revolution—the country, containing some ten or twelve thousand souls, being subject to the city, which contains two. The religion is Catholic.

The town of Zug stands on the lake shore, and

is rendered a pretty object in the distant view by its walls and towers, which were constructed to resist the ancient modes of warfare. As we approached it, the children rushed out to beg; sturdy young rogues who deem earning a penny in this manner a sort of pastime. One lad officiously offered to place the *sabot* beneath the wheel; but, after a moment of parley with the coachman, he dropped the iron, and walked surlily on. On inquiry, I found he had been notified there would be no pay. *Point d'argent, point de Suisse.* We could not help laughing at the coincidence; though the same result would be just as likely to follow the same circumstances in France or Italy. In England, habitual deference would have got the better of cupidity, though the lesson would be remembered; and in America pride, and perhaps principle, would have carried the lad through with his self-assumed job.

At Zug we quitted the carriage, with orders for it to proceed to Lucerne. We then engaged a guide, and took a boat for Art. The shore was well lined with batteaux, fitted as those already described on the Oberland waters, with established prices, and other conveniences. The delay did not exceed twenty minutes. A collation, which had been ordered "for the good of the house," was taken into the boat, and eaten by the way.

We were nearly three hours in going to Art, with as many oars. The lake is pretty; but by no means so singularly beautiful and wild as

those we had before crossed. Our guide proved to be intelligent, and a little of a wag. He was a staunch defender of the new system. Among other things, he told us, with evident satisfaction, there was but one man in his canton who wrote *de* before his name; at the same time, he appeared to be fully aware of the important truth that perfection is hopeless, and that too much must not be asked of democracy. In short, he had, as is commonly the case, much more practical common sense, on all these subjects, than those who claim to be exclusively the salt of the earth. Those who think themselves set apart for the sole enjoyment of the good things of this world, forget that this state of being is merely a part of a great whole; that a superior Intelligence directs all; that this divine Intelligence has established equitable laws, and implanted in every man a consciousness of right and wrong, which enables the lowest in the scale to appreciate innate justice, and which makes every man, in some degree, critical in matters that touch his own welfare. Education and habit, it is true, may blunt or pervert this natural faculty; but, as prosperity is notoriously more apt than adversity to lead the heart astray, I have never yet been in a country in which what are called the lower orders have not clearer and sounder views than their betters of the great principles which ought to predominate in the control of human affairs. I speak of classes, and not of individuals, of course; nor do I believe that any con-

dition of slavery, however abject, ever extinguishes this perception of simple truths, which has been implanted by God for his own great ends. The ability to express is not always commensurate with the ability to conceive; and, as to what are called popular excesses and violence, they are commonly the results of systems which deprive masses of the power to act in any other manner than by an appeal to their force. Bodies of men may be misled, certainly, and even justice when administered violently becomes dangerous; but in all such cases it will be found that a sentiment of right lies at the bottom of even the mistaken impulses of the majority. What sense of right, on the other hand, can accompany those who throw firebrands into masses with a view to profit by their excesses; who hurry a people on to madness in order to benefit themselves, through the reaction, by a return to power; who, in short, deceive, excite, and combine, in order to betray, that they and theirs may profit by the frauds? The latter was the course of the European aristocracy during the French revolution, most of the abominations of which, I believe, are now attributed by cool-headed and impartial men to their secret agents. Majorities may certainly oppress as well as minorities; but the former, having the conviction of their force, rarely do so for their own security.

Art is a small village, at the head of the lake of Zug, in the canton of Schwyz, or Schweitz. Of course, we had now reached the very focus of

Swiss independence, and were, in truth, drawing near the scenes of Tell's memorable exploits. We ordered horses for the ladies, and proceeded ahead, on foot, towards the ruins of Goldau. The walk, for a mile, was along an excellent carriage road, and through meadows of exquisite delicacy and verdure, among fruit trees and all the other accompaniments of rural beauty. I can cite to you nothing with which to compare the neatness and velvet-like softness of the fields, but those of door-yards in our prettiest villages; for, in the way of agriculture on a great scale, we have nothing that is comparable. The English lawns are not neater, and their herbage did not appear to me to be as lively and choice. Figure to yourself the chill that came over our delight, at passing through such a vale, when we found its loveliness blasted by piles of rock, earth, and stones, that had fallen across it, in one overwhelming mass, burying hamlets, houses, churches, fields, and owners. Of this extraordinary catastrophe I shall have occasion to speak hereafter.

At Goldau, which stands on the site of a buried hamlet of the same name, we left the carriage road, diverging, by a bridle path, into the fields. Here we were overtaken by the horses, and the ladies were placed in the usual well-protected seats. W—— and myself continued on foot. We had been much amused at Art with a species of pious flirtation, between the landlady and two capuchins, whom she was treating to some of the creature

comforts of her well supplied larder. This woman wore a muslin frill, by way of apology for a cap, which, the colour excepted, exactly resembled a cock's comb. The hair was all drawn back from her forehead and temples, to form a foundation for this singular ornament of the head. We found this, however, to be the prevailing fashion here. When will it reach Broadway, viâ la rue Vivienne? One of the capuchins in question came up with the horses, and I profited by his good humour to get into discourse with him. All the cantons of this part of the Confederation are Catholic, and this brother was one of a fraternity which dwells habitually in the valley, but which keeps an outpost on the side of the Righi, at a spot where there is a chapel dedicated to *Notre Dame des Neiges*—Our Lady of the Snows!—There is at least poetry in the Popish names; nor can a pious intention be denied those who formed an establishment like this. My companion was one of the three who, just then, were on duty on the mountain, and we had the prospect of his company as far as his abode.

At first, the ascent was gradual, the path leading through meadows and copses of wood, in a way to render it pleasant. This lasted for some time, during which I walked ahead with the monk. At length he suddenly excused himself, by saying that the hour had arrived when he was obliged to attend to his periodical devotions. Taking out a breviary, to work he went, by beginning to mutter the usual Latin prayers. W—— and myself, observing

that we had a sharp pitch of the mountain in front, pushed vigorously ahead without looking behind us, for several minutes. Though resolute and active, downright want of breath ere long compelled us both to stop.

The path here actually ascended by a species of stairs, made by placing logs and stones among the rocks, in a way to render them secure. Each step was very broad, and some of them were disagreeably high. There were a good many landings, and of course the direction varied from time to time. We had come to a halt, on a projecting spur, of our natural ladder, and the scene was now so thoroughly Swiss that it merits a more minute description.

There had been a shower while we were on the lake, and the mists were rising from the forests and clinging about the sides of the mountains. We got but partial glimpses through the openings at the distant view, though these constantly varied like a moving panorama, besides being really beautiful in themselves. Among the other floating objects was the pretty little lake of Lowerz, with its rocky island and ruined tower. Directly beneath us lay the meadows and copses through which the path meandered down to the desolation of Goldau. The party below had been detained by meeting some return horses from the mountain, the guides choosing to change the cattle. They were now coming on, however, in a line through the meadows, with the bareheaded capuchin bring-

ing up the rear, still at his *aves* and *paters*. The relieved horses were disappearing in a thicket, on their way back, and a drove of cows was winding its way down the steps beneath us, followed by six or seven dairy-men, having their tubs and milking stools strapped to their shoulders. It was the day when the mountain pastures were abandoned for those in the valley. One sturdy broad-backed fellow closed the procession with a live calf on his shoulders. The mildness of the day, the hue, (for evening was not distant,) the play of the mists, the smoking forests, and the dark verdure of the meadows, contributed to render this one of the most exquisite rural scenes imaginable. You may form some opinion of the scale of the whole picture by getting an idea of the size of this mountain. Three thousand cows alone are pastured on it during the summer; there are numerous flocks of sheep besides. This being the first day of September, most of them were descending by the different paths which communicate with the valleys. That we were on was one of the least frequented by the herdsmen and shepherds.

We were by no means done with our stairs, which seemed fairly to lead to heaven. At length, after being nearly out of breath, heated, and with parched mouths, W—— and myself reached a little tavern that was well filled with shepherds, cowherds, and calf-carriers, on their way down. Delicious water spouted from a fountain a little farther on, and I hurried to it, with a feeling of

thirst that I scarcely remember to have suffered before. Fearful of drinking, I put my wrists under the stream. So great and sudden was the effect, that I was actually quitting the spot, when W—— reminded me that I had not tasted the water! One or two swallows sufficed. It may be more pleasant to drink on such occasions; but the other is by far the safest course, and it is equally efficacious in slaking thirst.

We now had a delightfully cool walk through a wood of larches; the whole party overtaking us, with the exception of the monk, who joined the cowherds at the inn to slake his thirst in a less heretical manner. Quitting the wood, we entered some meadows, always ascending; but the labour seemed light after that we had just gone through. At length we came to a cluster of eight or ten buildings, among which are several inns, and the *hospice*, with the little chapel of "Our Lady of the Snows." This hamlet is in a sort of dale, though perfectly level ground is scarcely found this side the great staircase, being surrounded with pastures and meadows. As we passed the *hospice*, two monks looked at us through the windows; these, with the one left behind among the calf-carriers, composed the fraternity that inhabited the building. They pass the winter here, and offer succour to all who want it; but scarcely any besides the shepherds ever approach the spot after autumn. The *hospice* dates from 1689; but the inns have been set up since the rage for travelling

has become so general. The baths are abandoned, I believe, in winter. This place is much resorted to on Sundays and holydays by the mountaineers, and the 8th of September is a great festival, in honour of the birth of Mary. Other fêtes, of a more rustic character, are kept on this vast and pleasant mountain, which attract large concourses of spectators.

We stopped at an inn. The crowds on the summit frequently drive travellers here in summer, in quest of lodgings. By advice of the guide, we betook ourselves to refreshments; to my surprise, he ordered tea for himself, and we followed his example. This man told me he could undergo more fatigue, aided by this stimulant, than by any other. The practice of taking tea, as a restorative, after a hard day's work in the mountains, is, I find, very general; but, although we take it constantly, as a national usage, I was not aware that its consumption had got to be so common on the European continent.

The path was always upward, after leaving the *hospice*, though there was no very severe ascent. It led through pastures, and nearly in a direct line. W—— and myself pressed on, nor did an inscription, in memory of some Saxon prince, cut on the living rock, tempt us to halt. Before us lay a broad reach of pastures on an inclined plane, the azure of the heavens bounding its upper margin. Thither then we eagerly held our way, leaving guides, horses, and companions far behind. Twenty times,

during the afternoon, I had been reminded of the Pilgrim's Progress, by the rocks, marshes, burdens, and weary ascents, and it now appeared as if the end of our labours, like his, was to be heaven. Upward then we urged, until, without the smallest sense of fatigue, we stood on the very verge of that line which for half an hour had lain before us, bounded by air!

For myself, I can fairly say, that, the occasion of a total eclipse of the sun excepted, I never felt so deep a sentiment of admiration and awe, as at that exquisite moment. So greatly did reality exceed the pictures we had formed, that the surprise was as complete as if nothing had been expected. The first effect was really bewildering, leaving behind it a vague sensation, that the eye had strangely assembled the rarest elements of scenery, which were floating before it, without order, in pure wantonness. To this feeling, the indefinite form of the lake of Lucerne greatly contributed, for it stretches out its numerous arms in so many different directions, as, at first, to appear like water in the unreal forms of the fancy. Volumes of mist were rolling swiftly along it, at the height of about two thousand feet above its surface, and of as many below ourselves, allowing us to look through the openings, in a way to aid the illusion.

The party came up in time to enjoy the effects of the vapour before it blew entirely away. We were at the point which is called the Righi Staffel, and I can describe the position no better, than by

likening it to the roof of a shed, placing the spectator on its upper edge. The entire mountain is near thirty miles in circumference at its base, standing like an advanced bastion of the Alpine range, separated from all others, and the place we occupied was more than 4000 feet above the adjoining lakes, and about 5500 above the sea.

The manner in which Lucerne coquetted with us, before the vapour drove away, was indescribably beautiful. This town, which is surrounded by ancient walls, that are bristling with towers, and which contains many striking objects in its churches and other edifices, was actually several leagues distant, though it appeared nearly beneath the eye. But why speak of one object, when there were a thousand? Of towns, there were Küsnacht, Sarnen, Lucerne; and villages without number. The blue of the water, too, imbedded, as it was, in dark mountains, was alone sufficient to make an uncommon landscape. It was of the colour of the skies in the old Italian paintings, which every one from the northern regions is ready to pronounce preposterous, but which was certainly seen here, in the other element, and to a degree almost to cause us to believe we had made acquaintance with a new nature.

As we did not choose to stay at the inn which has been erected near this enchanting spot, with the bald head of the mountain at no great distance, and in plain view, we pressed forward for the Righi Kulm, or head. Having still a little time to look

about us, however, the guide led us to a place at which the water had made a passage through the rocks, and where a stone dropped in the orifice above, found its way out at the side, several hundred feet down the high perpendicular wall which forms this face of the mountain. As you are so familiar with the state of New York, before quitting the Righi Staffel, I may give you some idea of the nature of its view by telling you that it is not unlike that from the terrace of the Pine Orchard, with the material difference, however, of the spectator being twice as high above the adjoining country, and three times higher above tide. The Righi is nearly naked of trees, too, at this elevation; the mountain is better placed, standing more forward from the great ranges; the atmosphere has that visible transparency which one observes in the most limpid water, and which great artists sometimes succeed in throwing around a landscape, while the country seen from the Kaatskill, will bear no comparison, in either natural objects or artificial accessaries, with those which cover the whole face of the land in the region I am describing.

I very well know that these comparisons are little likely to find favour among patriots, in a country in which it is permitted to say with impunity what one will of the institutions, the work of man, and for which men are or ought to be responsible; but where it is *lèse majesté* to whisper aught against the perfection of natural objects,

unless some plausible connexion can be made out between them and democracy. American *bon ton*, in these matters, is of a singularly delicate texture, polite patriotism spreading its mantle before even the cats and dogs, when it will suffer those sturdy truths, which form the true glory of the nation, to defend themselves in the best manner they can. Thank God! they are strong enough to go alone. At the risk, however, of being set down as one spoiled by travelling,—a dire calamity!—and of certain defeat, should it ever be my ill luck to be put in the way of preferment by a "regular nomination," I now tell you the Pine Orchard will compare with the Righi, only as the Kaatskill will compare with the falls of Trenton, and that the Hudson, unrivalled as a river and in the softer landscape scenery, bears some such resemblance to the lake of the Four Cantons, in the grand and the sublime, as the Falls of the Canada do to those of the Niagara.

After viewing the fissure in the rocks, which threatens another land-slip at no distant day, we left the edge of the precipice, and followed a circuitous path which led to the summit. Here, although no longer taken by surprise, we enjoyed a still more extended and magnificent prospect. The mountain rises like a cone, from the shores of Zug preserving this form for nearly half a circle, when it joins the more irregular and huge mass already alluded to, and up one of whose sides we had been climbing. At the extreme northern

end, or that which overhangs the lake just mentioned, the conical form is preserved, even above the inclined plane of the Staffel, until it reaches the height of near 5000 feet above the neighbour-waters, and of more than 6000 feet above the sea.

The summit of the Righi Kulm may contain three or four acres, on a slightly inclined plane, the irregular section of an irregular cone. There are a lodging house à la Suisse, stables, a cross that is visible at a great distance from below, and an elevated platform, whence the most extended view can be obtained. This spot is without tree or shrub, but it is sufficiently well covered with grass.

Most views lose in the detail what they gain in extent, by climbing mountains. After the first feeling of satisfaction at commanding so many objects with the eye is abated, the more critical amateur misses those minuter points of beauty which we come most to love, and which are lost for the want of the profile in bird's eye prospects. In Switzerland, however, this remark is less true than elsewhere; the grand scale of its nature rendering a mountain, even when reversed, a mountain still. As most of the country is in high relief, the shadows remain distinct, and little is lost, or rather that which remains is so palpable and bold, that the minuter parts are not missed. In the view from the Righi, towards the north and north-west, it is true, this remark is not quite infallible, for in that direction the eye is limited only by distance, the country being generally broken, but

comparatively low. Even this wide sweep of vision, however, helps to make up the sublime, being map-like, distinct, and in remarkable contrast to the magnificent confusion of Alpine peaks in the opposite points of the compass.

The lake of Zug, being the nearest, is the most conspicuous sheet of water that is seen from the Righi Kulm. Over the dark blue expanse of this oval basin, the spectator seems literally to hang, as if suspended in a balloon. There is a spot, in particular, from which it appears as if one might almost leap into the lake, and nowhere is its southern shore visible immediately beneath the mountain. Art and its lovely valley, the desolation of Goldau, and the vast chasm in the mountain itself whence the ruin came, the little lake of Lowerz, the town of Schwytz, were ranged along the left. Behind them rose mountains in a crowd and confusion that render description hopeless. I leave your imagination to body out the thousand grand or picturesque forms in which these granite piles lift their bald heads, for in that quarter few were covered with snow.

I cannot tell you how many lakes are visible from the Righi Kulm. I counted thirteen; besides which the lakes of Zurich and Lucerne peep out, from behind the mountains, in no less than six different places, each basin looking like a separate body of water. Then there are many rivers, drawn through rich meadows in blue winding lines. Everywhere the waters were dark

as ultramarine. Of towns, and churches, and towers, it is almost commonplace to speak, on such an occasion. They dotted the panorama, however, in all directions; for it was not possible to look into one of the many valleys which opened around us like a spreading fan, without their meeting the eye.

I presume you think you have now obtained some just impressions of the view from the Righi. So far from this, I have yet scarcely alluded to its leading, its most wonderful feature. The things mentioned, beyond a question, are the first to strike the eye, and for a time they occupy the attention; but the most sublime beauties of this elevated stand are to be found in the aspect of the high Alps. These peaks are clustered all along the southern horizon, looking hoary, grim, and awful; a congress of earthly giants. They are seen distinctly only at short intervals, in the morning and evening. Frequently they are shut up in a gloom adapted to their chill mysteries, and then again parts appear, as whirlwinds and mists drive past. At such moments they truly seem the region of storms.

Amid the stern group, it is possible to distinguish the Jung Frau, and all her majestic neighbourhood; the Titlis, my Bernese discovery; and a hundred more that I could not name, if I would. I believe none of the great southern range of the Alps, including Mont Blanc and Monte Rosa, came

into the view. They are excluded by the great height of the nearer line of the Oberland.

We found a good many travellers on the Kulm, mostly Germans. Every one was too much occupied with himself, however, and with the great objects of the ascent, to waste the time in intercourse. The guide-books speak of the fearful nature of the precipices, and of getting down on the hands and knees to look over their brows; but I cannot say we were so humbled; for though imposing and grand, I found no difficulty in standing near the verge, and of sustaining my female companions there. As for W——, he went skipping and bounding along the outer edge of the plane, in a manner so goat-like that I was compelled to check him. Steadiness in such situations is, I believe, purely physical, and of course hereditary. The father of W—— was remarkable for this property, and had he been a Swiss, he would have made a notorious chamois hunter.

The Righi Kulm was the scene of a melancholy event, not a great while since. A German—a Prussian I believe—ascended with his wife. From some cause or other, (insanity, most probably,) the poor man took it into his head to leap off. It would seem that he announced his intention, for the screams and entreaties of his wife induced the guide to interfere. After a severe struggle, the German got away, and effected his purpose. The first fall is estimated at about eight hundred feet;

and when the body was sought, by torch light, it was found necessary to throw it down another precipice before it could be brought to a path.

The house was crowded, and although there is a private parlour or two they were occupied, and we were obliged to take a table in the general eating room. Most of the company were quiet and well behaved; but there were three or four German swaggerers who were sufficiently disagreeable. These gentry, students I believe, talked loud and dogmatically, filled the air with smoke, and, in walking, stamped like horses. I think they were the ne plus ultra of vulgar self-importance.

The night was windy, but it was cheered by a misty moon. I walked out alone, to enjoy the novelty of so unusual a situation. We seemed to be raised in the air, on an elevated platform, for the gales to beat against. The views were dim and extraordinary, but, at moments, of singular wildness. Once or twice, during the night, I awoke with a sort of sensation of flying; nor do I think it impossible that the house may yet slide off, from its giddy perch, before the high winds that prevail here in autumn. In such a case, it would probably be found floating in one of the lakes.

We were up early, of course, and enjoyed the rising of the sun. The mists were soon stirred, and the clouds began to float between us and the lower world. One, in particular, came sailing on our own level, and presently the whole summit

was wrapt in vapour. The feeling, as you may suppose, was much like that of being in a heavy fog. For a few moments we could not see across the Kulm. Then it blew away, and we saw the vapour flying towards the Alps. We had some exquisite glimpses through the mist at the lakes, and once or twice the whole line of the Upper Alps stood out in noble relief from the horizon. The mountains appeared to have come nearer to us, and were more awful than ever. Every minute, however, changed the appearance of objects, until the sun prevailed, when the day shone forth, fair and genial.

## LETTER XIII.

MY DEAR ———,

THE ladies determined to descend on foot, and we left the inn immediately after breakfast. Just before the door of the house at the Staffel, the guide took the way over the brow of the precipice, in a manner that looked very much like jumping down it. We found, notwithstanding, a good and, at that season, a sufficiently secure path. It is not always without danger, however; for, a few hundred feet down the mountain, he showed us a spot where he had slipped the previous spring. He had slidden, on the frozen snow, to the very edge of a precipice, whence a fall would have been destruction. He saved himself by the point of his iron-shod walking staff, and was rescued from the perilous situation by the aid of his companions.

The descent was very pleasant, and far from difficult. At first, there were a few sharp declivities, but we soon reached the meadows that lie along the bases of the mountain. A party of pilgrims, from *Notre Dame des Neiges*, passed us, chanting the *aves* alternately, the male and female voices harmonizing sweetly as usual. We made a short halt at a chalet that stands on a terrace, where we got some milk, and whence we had a fine and more

earthly view of the two lakes, than that from the Kulm. This would be a lovely spot for a summer retreat.

On our left, as we passed through some extensive meadows, the top of a small château, quite in ruins, showed itself from out a copse. This had been one of the holds held by Gessler, who had several in the mountains. To this place he was coming when killed by Tell. The latter event occurred lower down, at a spot where a good carriage-road now passes from Art, around the base of the Righi, and by the shores of the lake of Zug, leading to Küsnacht and Lucerne. It is called the *chemin creux*,* (or, as we should term it in America, the dug-way,) from the circumstance of the path being cut between two banks. Tell took the *bailli* at a disadvantage, in this narrow defile, protected himself by a thicket. He killed him outright by an arrow. History, which too often trespasses on the grounds of a sister muse, puts a fine speech into the mouth of the mountaineer, but these things are generally done in a very quiet manner, and without much parade of sentiment. It is singular so little is known of Tell. Some writers affect to doubt whether such a man ever existed. But his birth seems to be certain, though a mystery still hangs over his death. One version of it says he was drowned in trying to save a child. He does not appear to have been more than a reso-

* In German, *die hohle Gasse.*

lute mountaineer, who was willing to risk his life for liberty. Tell was one of the conspirators of the Griitli, but not a chief. Walter Furst, Werner Stauffach, and Arnold de Melchthal were the three leaders, each of whom brought with him, to the celebrated meadow, ten followers. Independence was not so much the object of these patriots, as relief from the tyranny of subordinates, and private grievances lay at the bottom of their zeal. Their measures were precipitated by the affair at the *chemin creux*, and the revolt commenced immediately. Its success has led to the establishment of the present Swiss Confederacy.

Gessler was killed the 18th Nov. 1307, and yet here is the same little hollow pass in the road, in which the deed was done! The castle was taken and destroyed, in January, 1308, and there stands its weather-beaten towers, much as they were left by the assailants; but it is now doubted whether Tell ever lived, and no one can say, certainly, where or how he died! The life of a man, truly, makes but a point in the march of time, his own hands rearing monuments that outlast his memory!

We reached Küsnacht, after a charming walk of three hours and a half. Here we discharged the guide, and took a boat for Lucerne. The course lay down a deep bay, when, turning a headland, we proceeded by the main lake to its foot. A worse boat could not have been invented, there being no very sensible difference between its bottom, and the "top-hamper" of the wooden canopy.

Sometimes our movement was very crab-like, and once I really thought we were about to try the sailing qualities of the roof. I am inclined to think it was just the worst craft in Switzerland, for most of the rest had awnings, and did go bow foremost. But we could get no other.

We passed two or three very small rocky islands, quite near the shore. Notwithstanding the awkwardness of the navigation, it proved to be a pleasant row, and we entered the port of Lucerne, which is the river Reuss, in safety, and in pretty good season. For the latter advantage, we were somewhat indebted to a fine breeze, that sent us along, for the last hour, in a very "will ye, nill ye" fashion.

Ordering dinner, we hastened to see the sights. One is a wounded lion, carved in the living rock, after a model by Thorwaldsen, and erected in honour of those Swiss guards who were cut to pieces at the taking of the Tuileries, in 1792. The keeper was a survivor of that bloody day, and he discharged his duty with the courtesy of an attendant upon kings. As a work of art, this lion is justly extolled, though I think it inferior to one of the two celebrated animals of Canova. Thorwaldsen is usually more successful, on the whole, with the grand than with the beautiful, while with Canova the reverse was notoriously the fact. Yet, in this instance, the modeller of Venuses, and Hebes, and Magdalens, appears to have stepped out of his usual track, and to have struggled successfully with his great competitor.

There is at Lucerne a raised map of Switzerland, on an extensive scale, which is well worthy of being seen. It nearly fills a large hall, and the mountains, glaciers, lakes, villages, roads, paths, ay, even the chalets, (meaning the traveller's chalets,) are designated with singular beauty and truth. It is the work of many industrious years, and quite a treasure in its way. These maps are now common enough, especially in Germany, but this, besides having the great merits of a size and an accuracy that surpass all others, is said to have been the first of the kind. I traced our different excursions by it with great satisfaction, and, with the closest scrutiny, could detect no essential error. Of course, an infinity of detail is wanting, though there is even more of this than one would be apt to imagine. Having all Switzerland in a room, I was enabled to satisfy myself that my own discovery was really the Titlis.

One of the bridges of Lucerne (covered of course) has a dance of Death painted beneath its roof, like the celebrated painting, on the same subject, at Basle. It is a miserable conceit, and only valuable as a relic of another age, and of a different state of manners.

The walls of Lucerne enclose a good deal of empty space. Like those of Zug, and many other Swiss towns, they are picturesque, being well garnished with towers, ornaments of a landscape that can hardly be misplaced, or so constructed as not to embellish the view, but which have become

quite useless in modern warfare, except as against a *coup de main*, having been built in the fourteenth century.

We went to bed with a sense of fatigue hitherto unknown in all our rambles. I rose, on the following morning, with a stiffness about the muscles of the legs, which I had never before experienced, and glad enough was I to see the carriage draw up. W——, on the other hand, left us on foot, taking the celebrated valley of Entlibuch, in his way to la Lorraine.

Our road now lay by the open country, and, though always through a beautiful district, it offered little, except in the neatness and architecture of the dwellings, of a very interesting kind. We passed the lake of Sempach, on whose banks, in 1386, was fought one of the great battles that assured the liberties of this country. On this occasion, 1400 of the Swiss were opposed to 6000 of the Austrian chivalry. The latter dismounted, and, forming a phalanx that was thought impenetrable, stood with their lances presented, to receive the assault. The Swiss placed themselves in column, presenting an angle, and charged. They were repulsed by a wall of iron. At this crisis, when the Austrians were beginning to open, in order to surround them, Arnold de Winkelried, a gentleman of Unterwalden, called to his companions to protect his wife and children. He then rushed forward, and, being of great size and strength, he seized the ends of as many lances as his arms could embrace, and

as he fell, pierced by their points, he drew his enemies down with him. By this opening, his countrymen penetrated, throwing the heavily-armed Austrians into confusion.

This is the Swiss account of the matter, and, numbers excepted, it is probably true in all its leading points. There are certain great events embalmed in history that it will not do to question, and which, even when false, it is unwise to disturb, as they are so many incentives to noble deeds. The early ages of Switzerland, moreover, show great self-devotion in her people, and I believe this act of Winkelried rests on much better authority than the affair of Tell and the apple.

We stopped to take a *goûter* in the middle of the day, and such a *goûter* I never before essayed. We asked for a fruit tart, and (odours and nosegays!) they gave us one made of onions; which the landlady maintained was a very good fruit, in its way. Of course, we ate exactly as much of it as we wished.

There were fewer farm-houses this day than usual; though the husbandry seemed good and the country rich. As we approached Argovie again, the system of irrigation reappeared. We passed an ancient château; got another peep of Aarberg, through the hills, but from a side directly opposite to that whence we had first beheld it; had a beautiful glimpse of a château, seated on the side of the Jura; met the Aar, soon after, against whose current fifteen men were pulling a boat; and made our halt at

Langenthal, for the night, in sufficient season to fill the vacuum that the onions had not occupied.

A fine village and a beautiful country, though quite level. We were again in the great valley of the Aar, you will remember, or in the district that separates the Jura from the Alps. We stopped at an inn which was the very beau idéal of rural comfort. The landlord was a hearty, well fed countryman; I dare say a magistrate of some kind or other; civil without servility, kind, obliging, and disposed to do all we wanted without fuss or the appearance of venality. In short, he was the exact counterpart of a respectable New England inn-keeper; a happy mixture of what a freeman ought to be, with what one of his calling finds it for his interest to become. As I walked like a horse with the spring-halt, he good naturedly inquired if I had received a hurt. Touching the calf of a leg, I merely answered, "Righi Berg." The laugh that followed was hearty and good humoured, and seemed to be mingled with honest exultation at the triumph of his mountains. It was contagious, and a merrier acquaintance was never commenced. We had delicious tea, a good supper, and as excellent beds as can be made with feathers—a material that ought to be declared contraband of sleep. We were served in our own room by a daughter of the inn-keeper, who by her intelligence and decency also strongly reminded us of home.

There are many manufactories at Langenthal,

and near it, though in the canton of Lucerne, is a convent of monks. The latter are Dominicans, and we were told there were thirty-three of them. This place is in a corner of Berne, and but a mile or two from the boundaries of Lucerne, Soleure, and Argovie.

On our way from Langenthal, we saw the first garde champêtre that had been met in Switzerland. There are plenty of gens d'armes in Berne; light men, commonly, with fusees slung at the back, wearing brown uniforms, shackos, and swords; soldiers in reality, though less military in their mien than those of France. We are too much in the practice of confounding the substance with the shadow, on all these matters, in America. It is the fashion to say that we have had a good training in liberty through our English descent. I believe the pretension to be singularly unfounded. It is true, that some of the great principles of English law accustom the subject to the exercise of certain rights, and create a disposition to defend them. But where do not similar feelings exist, as respects some immunity or other? There is no despotism so strong, that it is not obliged to respect usages, whatever may be the authority of the monarch, on paper. The great difference between England and the other nations of Europe, in this respect, has arisen from the fact that her rights are admitted in theory, while those of the continent have existed more as concessions from the monarch. England, too, has had more of them; and the

institution of juries, in particular, has caused an admixture of authority that, beyond a question, and in despite of gross abuses, has given tone and confidence to the subject. Still, as many fallacies and defects have followed this system of immunities, perhaps, as positive benefits. Take, as an example, the high-sounding privilege that "every man's house is his castle." This has a big appearance; and, in a state of society in which arrests in civil cases were liable to be abused by power, it may possibly have been some protection against practical tyranny; but, admitting the principles that the debtor ought to be made to pay, and that his person must be seized in order to proceed against his effects, on what sound notion of right and wrong is a law to be defended which enables him who owes, to bar his door and laugh at his creditor through a window? If a debtor ought to pay, and if service of process be necessary to bring him into court, it is rank nonsense to call this evasion of the right by a word as sacred as that of liberty. English jurisprudence and English liberty abound with these contradictions, many of which have descended to America, as heir-looms.

One of the consequences of considering mere franchises as political liberty, is a confusion between cause and effect, and prejudices like these which exist against a gensdarmerie. Political liberty does not exist in the nature of particular ordinances, but in the fact that the mass of a community, in the last resort, holds the power of

making such municipal regulations and of doing all great and sovereign acts, as may comport with their current necessities. A state that set up a dictator, so long as its people retain the practical means of resuming their authority, would, in principle, be freer than that which should establish a republic, with a limited constituency, and a provision against change. Democracies may submit to martial law, without losing any part of their democratic character, so long as they retain the right to recall the act. Thus may a democracy commission *gens d'armes* to execute its most familiar ordinances, without in the least impairing its political pretension. Laws are enacted to be executed; and if a man with a gun on his shoulder be necessary to their execution, it surely is no sign that liberty is on the wane that such agents are employed, but just the contrary,* by proving that the people

* In England there is a government of what is called three estates—or, of King, Lords, and Commons. Here are three distinct elements, admitted into the very organization of the system. The king and the peers hold powers that are hereditary;—the commons, at first, did represent that portion of the community below the lords, which in fact knew enough, or cared enough, about government, to take any great interest in its management. But the king, besides a power to make peace and war, and to create peers, and to dispose of all dignities and places; besides administering justice by his deputies, and executing all the laws through his agents, had also legislative authority co-ordinate with that of Parliament. His veto was absolute. It is scarcely necessary to add, that under such a system, the king literally governed, checked, according to circumstances, by the Parliament. The peers were few,

are determined their will shall be enforced. Liberty does not mean license, either through franchises or through disorders, but an abiding

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and though addicted to rebellion and conspiracies, they were effectually managed by attainders and the axe. So long as the monarch could make and unmake them at pleasure, and the commons were poor, impotent, and ignorant, both were virtually his tools. He reigned and governed; reigned, in virtue of his birthright, and governed all the better, perhaps, by this machinery of a spurious liberty.

This state of things was gradually changed by the progress of society. A succession of feeble and corrupt princes, too, concurred to assist the natural tendencies of events, which is generally to strengthen political aristocracies at the expense of the sovereign. After wresting power, little by little, from the Stuarts, the last of that family was finally set aside, the aristocracy profiting by a religious excitement to effect its ends. The constitution, as it now stands, was established in the reign of his successor, though subsequent ages have greatly developed its latent principle, which has tended from the first to convert the government to an oligarchy. The result is no secret. The King of England is permitted to do but one official act, except through the agency of his ministers, and, under the liabilities of ministerial responsibility. This one act, is a power to name his ministers. This power, however, would still leave him a monarch, were it real. It is notoriously unreal, the king having been reduced to be a mere parliamentary echo. Practically, he is compelled to respect the pleasure of the two houses, before he can even name those who are called his advisers.

The power to dissolve Parliament is available only to the faction of his ministry, which, as a matter of course, wields it solely for its own ends. If it can get a majority by a dissolution, well; if not, the alternative is resignation; the pleasure and judgment of the king himself counting for nothing.

In such a state of things the exercise of the veto becomes

authority, in the body of a nation, to adapt their laws to their necessities.

We passed by Hindelbank, on our way home,

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useless. So long as the ministry, which in fact alone can use it, is in the majority, it would not be likely to be called for—certainly not in any question of gravity—and, when in a minority, it is compelled to make way for successors, who would be of the same manner of thinking as Parliament. A dissolution might postpone, but it could not change these results. It might, possibly, a little modify them as to forms. Hence then, arises the fact, that political contests in England, are actively carried on *in the legislative bodies;* for these in truth decide on the character and complexion of the administration; and the fact, that nearly a century has elapsed, since any king of England has been known to use the co-ordinate power, which, by the old theory of the constitution, he was thought to possess in legislation, by resorting to the veto. In these later times, even his right to dissolve Parliament, twice in succession, has been pronounced unconstitutional. It was done by Mr. Pitt, and successfully, but with the moral certainty that he was sustained by the nation, and, what was of more account, with a belief that he must prevail in obtaining majorities, through the great influence of the patronage he wielded. The test of power, it will be seen, rests always in the fact of parliamentary majorities, the assumed prerogative of the king counting for nothing. In short, in the face of a majority, the royal authority is rendered null, or as if it did not exist. The indirection by which the aristocracy rules in no manner impeaches the result, since with these results are connected the entire action and efficiency of the government. The state of things is exactly reversed from what it was in the days of Elizabeth, who governed *through her Parliament;* whereas Parliament now governs *through the king.* There can be no question, that England has made much nearer approaches to liberty than formerly, by this change, for, while the sway of a limited constituency which, in itself, is controlled by a body

(for so we term the temporary abodes in which we dwell, in these distant countries,) and cast many longing glances at the little rural church, that

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of great landholders, is not true political liberty, it has at least the machinery of a free state, is compelled to promulgate the opinions of a free state—opinions, that, like drops of water, will, in time, wear away even the rock—and is certain to raise up a powerful body of dissentients which, in the end, may become in very fact the political and governing majority itself. In such a state of society, therefore, if all that is extorted from the prince be not really gain to the people, it has that appearance, accustoming men to reflect on their rights, and eventually securing a still nearer approach to the eternal principles of natural justice, which, in truth, contain the essence of political liberty.

Let us now look at America. Here, the sovereignty of the people, or of a popular constituency, is both avowed and maintained. All political power is expressly, periodically, and practically, representative; not representative, as is pretended by the English writers and declaimers on constitutional law, or on the principle that all power of this nature, whether derived from descent or not, is a trust, and to be exercised for the benefit of the whole; but representative on this general and just principle, representative in form, and representative by the constant recurrence to the constituency for fresh authority; in short, representative in fact. The judiciaries are no practical exception to this rule, for they perform no original acts of government, are purely interpreters of the law on principles which the other representatives may alter at will, and discharge their trusts under such responsibilities as to render abuses very unlikely to occur. They, too, are practically representative, through the fact that the constituency has retained a power to set them aside, or to modify their organization, and their trusts, at pleasure.

These facts are true, both as respects the states, and as it respects the Federal government. It follows that every trust

contains the admirable monument of Madame Langhans. In another hour, we alighted at la Lorraine, after a delightful excursion of eleven days,

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committed to each branch of the government is to be literally exercised by that particular branch, *and by no other*, else is the fundamental law violated not only in its letter, *but in its most vital principle.* For the legislative branches to pretend to check the executive branch, in such a polity, in the exercise of its legitimate functions, is not liberty in any shape, since it is a direct attack, not on the incumbent, (though such may be its pretended object,) but on the rights of the constituents, who have chosen to make this distribution of power, as well as to select the different agents. No truth can be clearer than the fact, that the delegate who exceeds his authority, trespasses on that of his principal. Now, while Parliament may wrest power from the king, who is representative only by a powerless theory, in the interests of the nation, and consequently in those of liberty, the American Legislature that wrests authority from an American Executive, or in any manner impedes the exercise of his constitutional trusts, invades the rights of a common superior. There is not even the excuse of a defective and otherwise irremediable organization for such a step, the constituencies having especially reserved to themselves the means of making all necessary changes.

These truths, so evident by the very organization and condition of society, and so unanswerably proved by the letter of the constitution, become still more apparent, when we reflect on the consequences of their violation. Not only do the people gain, in effect, by the invasions of Parliament on the authority of the crown, but harmony in the action of government, an indispensable requisite to peace at home and dignity abroad, is preserved by the right to dictate to the King whom he shall choose for his ministers. A continued collision between the legislative and executive powers of the state cannot exist in England, since the latter must be made to conform to the former. Before the revolution means were

during which we had sarcely an hour of really bad weather, an advantage of rare occurence in Switzerland, more especially among the moun-

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found to make Parliament conform to the will of the king; since the revolution, means have been found to make the king conform to the will of Parliament. But here, the reverse is exactly the case. In England, ministerial conflicts are necessarily legislative conflicts; here, they are decided by the people, *and ought to be conducted only before the people.* The American legislator, who suffers any considerations of effecting a change in the incumbency of the executive, in any manner, to influence even his public speeches, abuses his situation, (though the rights of debate are protected,) for he is not delegated to effect any such purpose, nor can he, *as a legislator*, be instrumental in producing such an end, without a complete perversion of the governing principle of the institutions, which infers that the *represented* are to impart their tone to the *representatives*, and not to receive it from them!

Abuses of this sort in debate, and performed by indirection, are perhaps inseparable from human frailties. But surely we have not yet reached the pass, when, under the pretence of liberty (!) one portion of a branch of the government can step out of its sphere, with impunity, and sit in judgment on the conduct of another branch of the government, by overt acts, as was the fact in the celebrated resolution of the Senate, during the session of 1833–4! It matters nothing whether the President had or had not exceeded his powers, in the act which led to this vote. If the Senate be suffered openly to assume the power of censuring him when he is wrong, the time is not distant, when, to effect the ends of party, he will be censured when he is right. The consequences of a continuance of such a practice, *and, unless firmly put down in the outset, a practice it will become*, will be a confusion and a want of harmony among the several powers of the state, against which the constitution has provided no remedy, and which, in the end, will of necessity, lead to further innovations, as a protection from its own

tains. Rain, indeed, is almost the only drawback on the pleasures of a summer residence in the cantons.

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abuses, and thus ultimately transfer from the constituent to the representative, an authority that is inherently necessary to liberty. The school-boy use of the epithet tyranny can delude no honest and reflecting American, on these essential points. The very act which may be, and is essential to liberty, as government is instituted in England, becomes a most dangerous usurpation, as government is instituted here. There is, moreover, no necessity for any such interference on the part of the legislature, the constitution having provided the judiciary, as the guardian of all law, whether fundamental or merely ministerial, reserving the *people* as arbiters in the last resort. There is but a single pretence for this legislative interference, and that is one which infers a radical defect in the most radical feature of the government, viz. an incompetency in the constituency to discharge the duties which this very constituency has imposed on itself.

The same truths apply to the use of the veto. It may be liberty in England to repress the exercise of the veto power in the crown, as separated from parliamentary majorities: while, with parliamentary majorities it clearly becomes unnecessary. But in America, *the veto is instituted in the interests of liberty.* The greatest power, and, of necessity, the power most to be apprehended in this country, is that of Congress. The veto is given to the Executive, therefore, that, as a representative of the entire constituency, he may check the greatest power of the state in the exercise of its authority. The fact that he is only one man, and that Congress is composed of many men, gives additional grounds for sustaining him in the discharge of a duty so delicate, since, it is notorious, that in a really free state, there is far more danger to be apprehended from bodies of men, than from individuals. Our own history abounds with instances of the Executives shrink-

ing from the responsibility of doing their duties, on the one hand, and of legislative innovations on the other.

Each measure is to be judged by its separate merits, as a matter of course, but I speak here of the abstract question. To accuse the Executive of setting up his will arbitrarily against that of the numerous bodies which compose the two houses of Congress, without reference to the merits or demerits of his reasons, and idly to compare his wholesome authority with the nominal authority of which Parliament has stripped the king, thereby centring, in fact, all the powers of the state in one of its branches, is to quarrel with one of the most salutary of the expedients which have been devised to prevent this very accumulation of trusts here, and to assail one of the most wholesome checks provided by the constitution.

The popular reasoning and popular feeling, too, on these important questions, among what are called the enlightened classes, go to show what I think must strike every man who has lived much out of his own country, or how very far opinion is behind facts. While the facts of this case are so peculiarly American, or, to express myself with greater accuracy, *would* have been American, had not the constitution been so rudely violated, both in its spirit and in its letter, the opinions that have been uttered have been very generally English.

I am aware that these are bold opinions to utter in a country where the mass has become so consolidated that it has no longer any integral parts; where the individual is fast losing his individuality in the common identity; and where, in a political sense, the only public is the *public servant!*

## LETTER X.

DEAR ———,

The Swiss certainly surpass us in courtesy of manner when speaking of the sisterhood of cantons. I do not remember to have seen a coarse allusion, a discourteous expression, or a sneer of any kind, in the remarks which frequently occur in the journals, concerning the measures of their neighbours. I was much amused the other day, at finding the people termed "The honourable public" in a proclamation. "The praise-worthy canton of ——," "The respectable canton," "The honourable canton," are very usual modes of designating a sister state. In America we presume on our common parentage, fraternity, and identified existence, and too often treat each other with a homely familiarity, there being in truth less real difference (there is abundance of imaginary) between a skipper of Kennebunk and a planter of the Arkansas, than there frequently is to be found between two Swiss peasants whose cottages may be seen in the same valley.

After staying three days at la Lorraine, to "set our house in order," we left Berne, once more, for Thun. This time we took the left bank of the

Aar, and were highly gratified with the views it presented. More châteaux, or rather more country houses, appeared than in the former excursions, and as the eagerness for the grander scenery abates, we begin to find a thousand new beauties in the common landscapes. Those parts of Switzerland which are not absolutely among the mountains, may vie with the best portions of most other countries in simple rural scenery, possessing, also, in addition to the ordinary features of all such views, the advantage of having a frame-work of the Jura, or of the Alps, or, as often happens, of both. In our drive to Thun, the southern background of the charmingly rural country through which we travelled, was the brown side of the Stockhorn, a mountain that rises above the lake of Thun five thousand feet, or one-fourth higher than the highest peak of the Kaatskills, and nearly seven thousand above the sea. Behind this, again, hovered the silvery peak of the Blümlis Alp, radiant, pure, and shining like a glory.

The approach to Thun, on this side of the river, is much finer than that on the other. We crossed a wide plain, keeping the picturesque, little, old château directly before us, like a lighthouse, and swept round the walls, nearly half a mile, before we reached a gate. These walls are built of small stones, rough-cast; and, as they are embattled, and are well relieved by little circular towers, they, at least, help the scenery, which, I believe, is their chief merit. It is scarcely possible to fortify a

town in Switzerland against the attacks of modern warfare, so many commanding positions lying near them all. Here and there, an exception is to be found; but the true policy of this country is to meet the enemy at the threshold. The whole region is a great natural bastion; and France or Austria will be sure to offer succour, perhaps compel its acceptance, in the event of invasion by either party. The Swiss, however, have seen Russian battalions pouring through their defiles. The Confederation has been formed and will be kept together more by outward pressure than by any natural cohesion. Could Savoy, Nice, the Tyrol, and the Vorarlberg be added to its territory, it would make a power quite capable of taking care of itself, and one altogether unique, by the conformation of the land, and the rustic habits of its people. As it is, "*les honorables cantons*" would be sadly troubled to make head against a vigorous combination, like that which partitioned Poland.

For the second time, we were treated with so much indifference, to give it a soft term, at the principal inn, that we left the house for *la Croix Blanche.* The guide, who was already engaged, manifested a good deal of surprise at this movement, intimating that we were quitting the genteelest house in the place. He was given to understand that less gentility and more civility would suit us better. The change proved a good experiment, in the latter important particular, at least; though the

good people of *la Croix Blanche* seemed quite as much surprised as the guide himself, at finding English who were willing to favour them with their custom. You know we usually pass for English on the continent of Europe; and I have long since given up the attempt to explain. In France, however, one gets on pretty well, by observing that he came from the country to which the French gave independence some fifty years since. So completely are the French persuaded of the efficacy of their interference in the revolution, that when I asked an intelligent French friend to name the battles in which their troops were engaged, the answer was, "*Mais dans toutes les batailles, n'est ce pas!*" France is much too rich in victories to trespass on our small claims to glory.

At Thun, I parted from the rest of my fellow travellers, who returned home, while, provided with a walking staff, (an ashen pole, six feet in length, and shod with iron,) and accompanied by the guide, who carried my knapsack, I took oars again for Neuhaus. I had engaged a boat for myself, and was just "shoving off," when a proposition was made by an Englishman to be of the party, with his wife and daughter. It would have been uncivil to refuse, and I consented. The wife was quiet and simple; but the husband was a thorough John Bull, who appeared to regard even the peak of the Jung Frau with sullen contempt, as if there were better things in its way in England. When I occasionally pointed out a strong feature in the

view, his manner of assenting seemed to say, "it was pretty well for Switzerland;" and once when I drew his attention to a singularly beautiful effect produced by the sun on a mountain top, he muttered a reply, and immediately began to tell me how cheap mutton was in Herefordshire. His wife, a meek-looking little woman, appeared to acquiesce in all he said from habit; but I thought she turned longing eyes towards the mountains, and I make no doubt that their visit to Switzerland is owing to her secret admiration of nature. He probably takes his revenge for the trouble she has given him by dilating constantly, when they are alone, on the excellence of the *côtelettes* they might be quietly eating at home.

I was not sorry to get rid of my male companion at Neuhaus. He conscientiously offered to pay his fair proportion of the price of the boat; but, provoked at his mutton, I declined accepting his money, a little *en grand seigneur*. He was evidently both surprised and mortified, when, to relieve him, I took back half of that which had just been given to the boatmen. We parted civilly, and I was honoured with a stare, and a profound bow; for indifference to money is certain to command respect in England. We had not got five rods from the party, before the guide whispered that the Englishman had not paid enough, his share coming to three-fifths instead of one-half. He had been mortified at my folly in refusing to take any thing at first, and almost as much grieved

at my ignorance, in not knowing better how to balance accounts. These little touches of national character are amusing enough—but, I know not how it is, the littlenesses one meets with among these sublime mountains occasion more disgust than they do in tamer countries!

The afternoon was fine, and I determined to pass the remainder of the day in exploring the valley, which lies between the lakes of Thun and Brienz, and which is very properly named Interlachen, (between lakes.) To avoid the crowd of travellers who frequent the inn at this place, I took a room at Unterseen for the night. They who throng baths, lodging houses, and fashionable places of resort, in a country like Switzerland, are usually ill qualified to enjoy its beauties, and I avoid them as so many blemishes. It is almost *primâ facie* evidence of unfitness for the scenery, to be caught in such a situation. Having secured a quiet room, I sallied forth, attended by the guide, a veteran who had passed his life in such service, relieved of his knapsack. As we walked onward, the old man began to converse, and I encouraged him, in order to come at the kernel as quickly as possible. In the outset, I discovered that he held democracy almost as cheap as a *parvenu* who had completely forgotten the struggles of his own probation. In speaking of the popular cantons, he observed that men like himself were permitted to have a voice in public affairs. This, certainly, was a home thrust, and it was an argument that I was forced to

laugh at, in spite of a determination to discuss the matter gravely. German was his mother tongue; and I inquired how he liked the Germans? "Not as well as the French," was his answer. "But the French overran the country, and carried away all your treasure, and otherwise much abused Switzerland!" "All very true; but then the soldiers treated us better than the Germans. In the houses they were polite to the women, and they can live on a little bread and an onion. Monsir, a German will eat as much as three Frenchmen." There was no resisting the latter argument, especially in a country where half the population rarely taste meat.

This feeling towards the French, as a people, is very general in the countries they have invaded. I have not been in Spain since the last war; but many who have, tell me the French are often more esteemed by the people of the country than their English allies. Here, the preference is generally given to the French troops, over the Germans and Russians, the people distinguishing very properly between the acts of those who lead and of those who merely follow. All this, however, is no more than a very common consequence between manner and matter. No great body of men was probably ever more wanting in the first principles of morality than the armies of the French revolution, and yet, retaining the *suaviter* of the national character as it then existed, they were enabled to turn it to better account than

probably would have been the case with more honesty and less tact.

We walked to the mouth of the vast gorge which leads towards Lauterbrunnen, and ascended a little hill, called the Rügen, which stands nearly before the entrance. I say a hill, for so it seemed to the eye amid the grandeur by which it was surrounded; but on ascending it, it proved to be in fact a mountain nearly as high as our own "Vision."

I was well rewarded for the trouble, by a noble panorama. The Wengern Alp appeared low in the throng of giants by which it was overtopped, and I could hardly persuade myself it was really the mountain, whence the lower world had looked so distant and diminutive. Behind it, the peaks of the Jung Frau and of the two Eigers, were glittering in the heavens, under the light of a setting sun, whose rays seemed to fall frozen from their snowy sides.

Near this little mountain is a ruin and a meadow, where the peasants have been accustomed to keep their rural games. A fête of this nature is spoken of in connexion with Mad. de Stäel, who was present; but what is Mad. de Stäel herself, much less her humours, in competition with the sublime altar that God has here reared in his own honour! I observed larches near thirty feet high growing on the crumbling walls.

The lake of Brienz is about as long as the Otsego, is materially wider, though much less indented by bays. Here the resemblance ceases. Instead

of being *surrounded* by hills, some five or six hundred feet high, it is *imbedded* among mountains that divide the clouds. These masses are often nearly perpendicular, though chalets cling to their precipices, and rich water-falls stream down their sides. An island or two would make it perfect.

A female voice, singing an English air, was heard in the thicket as we returned. Presently we met a pretty young English girl in the narrow path, her bonnet dangling from a finger, like one who was out on a careless evening stroll near her paternal abode. The party to which she belonged was not far behind. Her notes ceased as I came in view, and the bow I made in passing was disregarded. She mistook me for an Englishman, and did not dare observe this simple act of civility—nay, of human feeling—even in Switzerland, lest I might not be of precisely as elevated a class as herself "at home." Had I been mistaken for a continental European, the case would have been different; though it may be questioned, had my real origin been known, whether I should have escaped without a frown.

These rencontres of travellers are rarely agreeable. The presence of strangers who appear to be engaged in *low-country pursuits*, mid such scenery, produces on me the impression of an unpicturesque irreverence for nature. I had just left a spot, too, where a young Swiss had been in beautiful keeping with the scenery. There is a small

meadow in a dale near the ruin. The last rays of the sun were streaming across it, and a pretty peasant girl, with dishevelled hair, was raking together the scanty crop of grass. She was entirely alone, and seemed as innocent and as contented as she evidently felt secure. After all, she might have been out speculating on the picturesque, a suspicion that rudely obtruded itself when we met the English party.

As we descended the little mountain, several boats were seen pulling towards our own strand, and the evening, as the English say, was truly delicious. I had forgot to tell you that I clambered into the ruined tower, where I frightened two black-looking and most ill-omened birds from their roosts. I hope no evil will come of it!

These mountains sometimes produce sudden and startling effects. This evening, while retiring to bed, and after the candle was extinguished, I was struck with the sombre appearance of the night. Going to a window, all seemed dark and gloomy, when, raising my eyes gradually to the zenith in quest of a star, I found they had been ranging along the side of the black pile which frowns upon Unterseen. The night, in fact, was clear and cloudless.

The next morning found me on the way to Interlachen before the shops were open. While sauntering in front of the great gorge, in waiting for the guide, and looking at its noble mysteries, the honest old fellow came up, big with the intelligence that the hunters and guides of Grindewald

were in earnest in an intention to scale the Jung Frau; and that the attempt was to be made within a day or two. So many strangers were disposed to undertake the adventure, he added, that these mountaineers were incited to anticipate them, for the honour of Helvetia. It will give you some notion of the scale of Alpine nature, as well as of the purity of the atmosphere at this elevation, when I tell you that this morning, though distant from the spot more than three leagues, perhaps three and a half, I distinctly saw the little oven-shaped hole in the snow, whence the avalanche which has already been described had issued! I could not perceive that it seemed any smaller than when viewed from the Wengern Alp. It is possible, however, that more snow may have fallen from the same spot since our passage of the mountain; for I observed that a rock on the Wengern itself, which was then covered, was now bare.

The valley of Interlachen is ornamented by some as fine walnuts as I remember to have seen. Most of the fashionables were not out of their beds in the great lodging house, only two or three drowsy looking domestics being afoot. I did meet two young ladies, however, walking beneath the fine trees; though they appeared to be communicating secrets rather than admiring nature, as the tongue of one was in earnest motion, and the eyes of both were riveted on the ground—just in the way one would expect a soul-absorbing confidence to be given and received.

The boatmen were ready, and in half an hour we were on the lake of Brienz. There are no vineyards nor grain on the precipitous mountains by which it is surrounded; though Alpine pastures cover many of their sides, extending, in a few instances, quite to the summits.

Brienz stands immediately beneath a mountain, a perilous position in Switzerland, as has been proved by its own disasters. As the boat approached I counted one hundred and twenty brown roofs, besides the church, which is of stone, and which stands on a high rock a little without the cluster of houses. Several of the cascades that had been seen in August were now dry, the snows that supplied them having entirely melted. A torrent runs through the village, which, four years before, had swept away a house or two, drowning the inhabitants. Accidents from lightning, sacs d'eau, raging torrents, landslips, or rather falling rocks, and avalanches, are the regular Swiss calamities. To this may be added hail. I do not remember to have told you that there are companies of mutual assurance against the effects of hail, in some parts of Europe, and in this country in particular! This is a pass of circumspection to which we have not yet reached; though I believe we have something like it against losses from horse-thieves! On the whole, our companies argue the most advanced stage of civilization.

The boatmen pointed out a wall near the shore that rose about three feet above the surface of the

lake, and said they had passed over it with their boat this very summer. They speak of the present as being both a warm and a dry season, both of which are great advantages in Swiss travelling.

We left Brienz on foot, passing the extensive *débris* of two wide torrents soon after quitting the place. At one of them I was told a village had been entirely swept away, and children had been saved of whose parentage nothing was known; the latter bearing the name of the village. One of our boatmen was descended from this unknown stock. After all, he is only in the condition of nine-tenths of mankind, in being ignorant of his ancestry.

We soon left the highway, beginning to ascend through broken pastures, among which cottages were plentifully scattered. After passing a rude little hamlet, from which there was a fine view down the lake, the ascent became more rapid. We next entered the woods, and took the mountain *en corniche*, by a very good bridle-path. A place was passed, where the face of an overhanging rock had fallen across the route, covering six or seven acres below with fragments; still it was not easy to trace the spot on the precipice above, whence the vast masses had come. A valley may be filled, or ruined here, and the mountain from which the desolation descended shall stand, apparently, as undiminished in magnitude, as it is unconscious of the ruin it has produced. From this point, where I stopped to rest, a part of the lake came beautifully into the view, and three brilliant waterfalls were in sight, leaping

from precipices of dizzy height. Even the rushing sound of one came to us very distinctly across the broad valley. It descended about 700 feet, jumping playfully from shelf to shelf. The whole plain beneath was covered with dark barns, or chalets, of which I counted three hundred.

The ascent was gradual and easy, the path running beneath the shades of beeches, which we found very grateful, the day being warm, and the labour, though not severe, nearly constant. *Débris* abounded, but trees were growing among them all; a sure sign that ages had gone by since their fall.

At length a point on the mountain was reached, that commanded a view of Meyringen, with the whole of its rich bottom. Unfortunately there was no mist, and the scene was less enchanting than when first beheld. The edge of novelty, moreover, was taken off, and I found myself growing critical and fastidious: perhaps it would be better to say, more reasonable, and less hasty in my tastes: less under the influence of surprise and wonder, and more under that of the faculties of the mind. Travelling is an art, as well as another, and the experienced traveller has some such advantage over him who is setting up the business, as the connoisseur has over the mere tyro, in the fine arts. I had ceased to hunt for drapery, and fingers, and noses, and the other accessaries of the picture, to look more for expression and the thought.

The Aar brawled immediately beneath the point of rock just mentioned. Its bed had been nearly filled

with *débris* washed down by the Alpbach, a torrent on the other side of the valley, and its waters were finding their way past it, through fifty little temporary channels, that they were as busy as ants in cutting for themselves. An unsightly swamp was likely to be the consequence. All this was lost to the eye, however, in travelling by the road beneath.

Here we struck off, nearly at right angles, toward the summit of the Brunig,* which is the name of the pass. It took us just twenty minutes more to reach the pastures and meadows, that lie in the gorge, between two high mountains, which, quite luckily, it was not necessary to scale. The place was retired and pretty, vast fragments of rock being scattered among the verdant grass, as if the spot had formerly been a field of battle, where mountains had discharged their artillery at each other.

The descent now commenced, or rather we ceased to ascend. Soon after, I met our old acquaintance, the bear, carved on a stone, a sign I was once more on the borders of the great canton. At this point we entered the territory of Unterwald, the country of Winkelried, and one of the little districts that originally resisted the power of Austria. There are a few chalets, or rather cottages, on the pass, and at one of them I obtained a draught of milk, so delicious, that it will be remembered long after many a gorgeous banquet will be forgotten. Keeping in view the homely hospitality of the

* Or, Brüning.

American woods, I scarcely dared offer to pay for it, in a place that looked so romantic and unsophisticated, but, sooth to say, the money did not come amiss. I believe, as a rule, that the Swiss may be considered, very generally, as sufficiently civilized to be paid. One knows that these things depend on the frequency of the demands, and, on the whole, he who has the means to pay is commonly all the better off for being required to pay; yet the act of constantly filling the palm appears singularly out of place amid this wild and magnificent scenery, where one could wish no coin were current, but that which has been stamped in the mint of nature.

While on the subject of money, it may be well to let you understand something of the *matériel* of this country. In the first place, having no banks, there is no paper in circulation; the bankers are principally dealers in exchanges, though I presume they lend money too, making their profits in the difference between what they pay and what they receive. Each canton has the power of striking its own money, and each canton, I believe, does; though many of the smaller limit their issues to the very lowest denominations of coin. The old French crown, which has almost entirely been superseded in France itself by the five-franc piece, is very common here, having, as I understand, a small additional value in Switzerland. The old Louis d'or, of twenty-four francs value, is to be had also, and is the most convenient for travellers. Most of the cantons issue crowns, or four-franc

pieces, and gold coins corresponding to the Louis and double Louis d'or in value, but they are not very abundant. Many of the smaller coins will not pass out of their own cantons, while in many of the cantons even the base German coins are taken. The French money passes all over Europe, I should say, England alone excepted. The Swiss franc has the value of a franc and a half French, a circumstance that frequently misleads strangers who come from France. When the rent of la Lorraine was named to me in francs, I thought it particularly low; but when the payment in advance was made, as is usual with strangers, I had reason to think it particularly high.

On quitting the frontier house of Berne, the milk-money of which has induced a digression that you may find out of place, we proceeded through the meadows and pasture lands as before. I observed a quick, anxious look about the eyes of the guide, as we walked briskly forward, but without in the least suspecting the cause. A few minutes, however, sufficed to explain it. We mounted a little ascent, and came to a small chapel that stood on the edge of a precipice, and at a point where the path plunged suddenly into the valleys of the two Unterwaldens. Of course there was a view.

You have read so much already of surprises and of the effects of extraordinary and unexpected scenery, that I almost fear to recur to the subject. But the truth will not be said unless I tell you this

was *the* surprise, before all others. In most of the previous cases something extraordinary had been expected, and, although the fact so much exceeded expectation in this instance, nothing of very uncommon beauty had been looked for. I knew the Brünig was a celebrated pass, and that much had been written about its beauties; but I had thought its reputation was derived from the views on the side of Meyringen and the Oberland, which would certainly be highly esteemed in any other country, but with which, by comparison, I had been a little disappointed. I now discovered that the Brünig had charms of an entirely new description, and that its northern aspect is immeasurably the finest.

As soon as the delight of being so completely astonished had a little subsided, I quitted the path, and took a seat beneath the shade of a tree, that stood on the very verge of the precipice, to enjoy the scene more at leisure. The whole picture was in one long, straitened valley, that expanded a little however in the distance, and which was bounded north by the savage Pilatus, and the smiling Righi. The near view embraced the village, meadows, and lake of Lungern. The latter, looking blue and dark, laved the side of one of the most exquisitely rural mountains eye ever beheld; the whole of its broad breast being in verdant pastures or meadows, and teeming with brown chalets. This foreground lay on a terrace, a league or two in length, and half a league wide, several hundreds of feet beneath the spot where

I had seated myself, and as many above the more distant lake and the plains of Stantz and Sarnen, which formed the background. Great depth was given to the whole by this accidental formation; and yet the atmosphere was so pure as scarcely to leave the outlines of a cottage indistinct.

The alluring tints of this view were among its most extraordinary beauties; for while the mountain appeared to cast a deep shadow athwart the lake, the water playfully threw its cerulean hue upward against the mountain. There was indeed a rare bluish tint cast athwart the whole valley, so unusual as scarcely to seem natural, and yet so soft as to produce none but the most agreeable effects. It was not unlike that vivid, unnatural atmosphere we find in some of the old Italian paintings, already mentioned, and in which the ultramarine has stood after the other colours have faded. In the midst of it all the verdure was exquisitely delicate, the colours of which I speak seeming to exist in the two fluids of air and water, and to temper rather than alter those of other objects.

The lake of Lungern is about a league in length, and the descent to the level of that of Sarnen, at its northern end, is so sudden and rapid as to give it the appearance of being dammed. This is literally the fact, though nature has been the workman. The district is at this moment engaged in cutting a tunnel through the rocks, with a view to lower the surface of the pretty little basin, by which means it is calculated that a thousand acres of excellent mea-

dow will be obtained. I exclaimed against this innovation on the picturesque when it was told me; but, after all, the banks of the lake are so precipitous, and the water so deep, that less injury will be done to the view than might at first be supposed. At all events the case is hopeless, if the inhabitants of this valley see a plausible reason for anticipating, from the experiment, so large an addition to their meadows. In their eyes, a cheese is a more beautiful object than a lake or a rock; and such, I apprehend, is the governing rule for the appreciation of the sublime and beautiful among the mass of mankind everywhere. A love of the picturesque, unhappily, does not depend on the first wants of nature, while the love of bread and cheese does.

I complained to the guide that Ebel had not done justice to the Brünig. Hereupon the old man broke out into a philippic against all books, gazetteers, and maps, intimating pretty plainly that the word guide should never be compounded with any other, if the traveller did not wish to be misled. He illustrated his position by admitting that, although he had passed through the cantons a hundred times, if compelled to compress his knowledge in a book, he should make but a bad hand of it. I have certainly found a good many mistakes in Ebel; but, on the whole, it is one of the most accurate works of the kind I know.

In descending from the high place into the inhabited world, the mind was rudely recalled to the failings and wants of mortality by a little girl, who

scampered across a meadow towards a gate, which she succeeded in shutting just in time to ask something for opening it again as we arrived. At Lungern we halted a moment to refresh ourselves. This place is Catholic, as indeed are all the Forest Cantons, or the four little states that were the nucleus of Swiss *independence*—not of Swiss *liberty*, you will remember; the distinction being all-important. The churchyard was glittering with little gilded iron *headstones*, (excuse the bull,) many of which were ornamented with miniatures of the deceased. Thus a man and his wife would appear side by side, on a plate let into the iron, which was usually a good deal wrought. On some of these plates I counted not less than six or eight very unsophisticated miniatures, which probably represented the dead of an entire family. Some were quite faded with age, and others, again, were fresh and tawdry.

The road lay along the eastern shore of the lake, and a most beautiful path it was. As we came to the northern extremity of this exquisite sheet of water, the manner of its formation was completely visible. A fall of part of a mountain has literally dammed the upper valley; and the water, after accumulating to a certain height, flows over the lowest part of the broken and uneven rocks, into the next level beneath. The good peasants, therefore, are rather restoring nature to what she originally was, than innovating on her laws, by cutting their tunnel.

From this point we got a view of the valley of ober Walden, or Upper Walden—this canton being subdivided into two of those communities that our nullifiers, with so much emphasis, call independent and sovereign states—imperium in imperio—which are termed the Upper and the Lower Walden. Lungern is merely a part of the former. In extent, Unterwalden, for such is the cantonal name, is the thirteenth of the twenty-two sisters, and in population the twentieth. It is in the very heart of the Confederation, and the entire population may be about twenty thousand souls, who are pretty nearly divided between the two great internal powers. The governments of both are essentially democratic, though that of Lower Unterwald being more sophisticated than its sister, while it is pure and integral in the source of its power, has the most practical checks. In this half-canton the citizen is admitted to his political rights at the age of eighteen. The laws are all passed in original assemblies of the people, which, after all, in numbers do not exceed many of our own town-meetings. We have very many townships that contain ten thousand inhabitants, and Upper Unterwalden has not more than nine thousand. Boston, previously to its incorporation as a city, you will remember, contained more than fifty thousand.

These little communities have many primitive fundamental laws. Thus, in Lower Unterwalden the pain of death is pronounced only by what is called the "Council of Blood," which is composed

of the Simple Council, or a body formed for other objects, of certain magistrates and counsellors, and of all the citizens who have attained the age of thirty years.

There are very sonorous titles in this little country, which has stadtholders and counsellors without number. I should think the principle of rotation in office of little practical utility here, for one does not very well see where so small a population is to find incumbents for so many places. In such a state of society one would soon tire of political saltation. The people are very generally pastoral, and of the simplest habits, by necessity, as well perhaps as by inclination. They are rigid Catholics; and the fact is often cited as a proof that the religion of Rome is not necessarily opposed to the most extended political liberty. No very conclusive argument is to be drawn, either in favour of or against any particular system, by the example of communities situated like these. Unterwalden has been an independent country since the thirteenth century; but it would surely be absurd to look into the local institutions for the means which have enabled a people so weak to maintain for so long a time their separate sovereignty, while so many powerful states have been overrun, parcelled, or destroyed in the interval. Switzerland itself exists as a distinct Confederation by the common consent of her neighbours, and the preservation of the particular rights of its several parts have been the consequence of an im-

perious necessity, heightened by the prejudices of origin and even of religion, rather than from any especial merit in the institutions, or in the people. The country has not been worth the cost of conquest, sufficing barely to give an humble subsistence to the inhabitants, and possessing no other political value than that of a frontier; a character it is probably better able to preserve inviolate as a neutral, than as a dependant. It is not improbable, however, that the religion of these small cantons may indirectly have been instrumental in maintaining their independence of each other, and that personal liberty is the boon accorded as a reward for the sacrifice; for a great and enduring sacrifice it is, in the Swiss, to maintain the confederated form of government, as a moment's reflection will show.

For a nation of limited extent, and tolerably identified interests, the confederated form possesses scarcely an advantage, while it necessarily brings with it many peculiar disadvantages. Diversity of laws, want of unity, embarrassments in the currency, the frequent recurrence of frontiers, organized means for internal dissensions, and a variety of similar sources of evil are, beyond a doubt, the ordinary price that is paid for the confederated form of government. This is proved by Germany, by our own early experience, and is daily felt in Switzerland. These evils are even materially increased in this Confederacy by its diminutive size, and by the great number of its members. All the liberal and enlightened Swiss, with whom

I have conversed, admit that the present system is imperfect. Most of them, it is true, are opposed to consolidation, for the inhabitants of the towns object to having their policy brought down to the level of that of the mere mountaineers; but they desire a Union, like our own, in place of the Confederation: a central government, that, for certain common objects, can act directly on the people, without the interference of agents, who derive their authority from a different source. In short, it may be said, that, in Switzerland, there is a constant natural tendency, dependent on the force of their true interests, to unite more closely, but which is violently and successfully resisted by the mere strength of habits and prejudices. The great, affluent, and populous communities are all of the reformed religion; Zurich, Berne, Basle, Schaffhausen, Vaud, Neufchâtel, and Geneva, being essentially Protestant cantons. These seven states contain nearly, if not quite half, of the entire population of Switzerland, and probably much more than half its wealth. Appenzell, St. Gall, the Grisons, Argovie, and Thurgovie, are nearly equally divided between the two churches; and it follows, that a consolidation, or a very intimate union even would give a preponderance to the Protestant interest. In addition, Catholicism avoids discussion, and it would be a part of its natural policy to keep its folds as distinct as possible from all others. I infer from these facts, that the church of Rome would find sufficient motives for permitting the simple

mountaineers of the Forest Cantons to maintain their democracy, on condition that they will insulate the church. General deductions are never to be drawn from particular facts. The political tendencies of the Romish church, or proofs of its spiritual liberality, are not to be sought in these remote and little important communities, overshadowed, as they are, by the greater influence of their powerful Protestant neighbours, but in those great countries where it is uncontrolled, and can independently carry out its real policy. At Tockenburg, we were told, the two sects use the same building; and I have witnessed a similar toleration at Berne. Yet at Rome itself, notwithstanding the great importance of travellers to that decaying town, the Protestants receive it as an act of grace that they are permitted to worship God after their own forms, at all!

The most purely democratical cantons, beyond a question, are Catholic cantons. Still their democracy is the result of accidental circumstances, rather than of principles; for some of these very states rule dependencies, peopled by their relatives, friends, and neighbours, as political vassals.* Freedom is obtained by two great processes. In the one case, the facts precede opinion; in the other, opinion precedes the facts. The first is always the safest, and generally the most abiding; the latter, the most elevating and ennobling. English liberty,

* Schwytz seceded, temporarily, from the Confederation, in 1832, to maintain this unjust supremacy.

and, by obvious connexion, our own, has the former origin; French, Spanish, German, and Portuguese liberty, whatever there may be of it, has the latter. We enjoy the advantage of antiquity, and, consequently, of a greater degree of advancement; but, I think it will be found, in the end, that the latter will be the most consistent, since, if they have not commenced in a way to ensure moderation and safety, they have attacked the citadel of prejudice, and will not be so liable to run into contradictions between fact and opinion, by walking backwards; moving one way, while their eyes are cast along another. Nothing strikes the foreigner more unpleasantly, on visiting America, if we can credit their own accounts, than finding us *practising* on one set of principles, and *talking* and *feeling* under the influence of its converse!

The catholic cantons of Switzerland are probably democratic, because they had no available substitute for the prince they set aside, when they rejected the house of Habsbourg. A community of herdsmen could not furnish a prince, and they quietly settled down into that form of government which was the most easy of attainment, and the most natural to their condition. So far from the circumstance of their being Catholic proving any thing in favour of the political liberality of Catholicism, their church itself is, in a great degree, owing to the want of a true spirit of liberty. Religious toleration is an inevitable consequence of political liberty, and, in point of fact, the reformation was at first proscribed among them. Had their politi-

cal condition originated in principles instead of fortuitous and unavoidable circumstances, its first care would have been to secure liberty of conscience. Education is greatly neglected, moreover, and superstitions are made to take the place of higher motives. All this shows that true liberty has no abode here. Catholicism may have deferred to facts that are too potent for its direct efforts, but, in so doing, it has taken care to keep opinion in leading-strings, and to render civil liberty a lure to its own views, rather than a frank associate.

I stopped at a church by the way-side, that is named after the celebrated St. Nicholas de Flüe. It shows equally great devotion to sect, and to superstition. There are six altars, and a richness of decoration altogether beyond what one would expect in a country so poor and simple. The portico has some attempts at paintings, *al fresco*, although they may possibly be in oil, for I did not examine them minutely. The graves had the same head-irons, and little portraits, as those of Lungern. But I do not remember to have seen, anywhere else, one mark of Catholic discipline that is to be met with here. The water-table of the church was fairly lined with human skulls; a grinning and grim array!

I remarked, as we came down the valley, crosses erected on nearly all the conspicuous heights. The effect of these memorials of the passion of Christ was both deep and touching, and, at times, they were singularly admonitory. While the eye was, perhaps, studying the brown side of a precipice, seeking

to analyze its parts, it would slowly rise to the summit, where, resting, for an instant, on a ragged outline of rock, drawn, as they all are, in strong relief, against a pure sky, faint thread-like lines would issue out of the void, until they stood distinctly poised on the highest peak, emblems of the most sublime mystery that has been presented to the human mind. I saw a dozen in the course of the day, all looking like so many grateful signs of mercy that had descended from heaven.

We reached Sarnen, the capital of the Upper Unterwald, *ob Wald*, or *ob dem Wald*, in Swiss German, in very good season, having come from Brienz on foot, a distance of some twenty miles. After securing a room at the principal inn, which was kept by some great statesman or other, I profited by an hour or two of day-light, to look at the place.

Sarnen is a capital in every respect suitable to the country. On a little height, near the town, once stood the castle of the bailiff of the house of Habsbourg, he who caused the eyes of Arnold de Melchthal's father to be put out. A terrace on this spot is now, and has been for ages, consecrated to the meetings of the Landsgemeinde, or convocations of the people; the original assembly in which the nation convenes. Here also, is the place where the population collect to shoot at the mark; an amusement, or rather a discipline, that is national. The rifle is truly a Swiss weapon, for in defending their rocky passes, it is the most efficient that can be employed. Every district has a place for the sharp-

shooters to assemble, and a round target, about as large as the head of a hogshead, with circles in paint, is to be seen near every hamlet. There is also often a house, for protection in bad weather.

The view from the Landenberg is pretty, overlooking the village, and the broad meadows, amid which it is seated. I counted one hundred and fifty roofs in the *bourg*. The town-hall, or state-house, is a square stone building, with six windows in a row. It is not unlike a better sort of country court-house in America. I examined the council halls, which are plain and business-like. One of them is decorated with paintings of the fathers of the republic, of a most unsophisticated perspective and colouring. The artists had been particularly fortunate in delineating the beards. One portrait of St. Nicholas de Flüe, however, was really good, being the offering of an errant son of the canton in modern times. Most of the houses have the shingles kept in their places by heavy stones, *à la Suisse*, and take, as a specimen of rustic simplicity, the fact that some women were breaking flax in the vestibule of the church.

The Righi and Mount Pilatus limited the sight towards the north, while the mountains of the Oberland rose above the pass of the Brunig, in the south. The near view was that of an extensive plain, surrounded by stern and lofty Alps.

The inn was crowded, travellers arriving from the Righi, and Lucerne, until night. We all supped in a common room, and among the rest was a

party of French, who conversed in bad English, with an evident desire to display. I gathered from their discourse, that they had lately been travelling in England. Mistaking me for an Islander, they began to compliment the country in a way that alarmed my modesty, and forced from me a disclaimer. The effect of my saying I was not an Englishman, was sufficiently ludicrous. At first, they seemed to doubt it, as they were pleased to express it, on account of the purity of my pronunciation; but, on receiving a grave protestation of the truth of what they had been told, coupled with the fact, that I had never even put foot in England, until I had reached my present stature, and that eight or nine months, at different periods, within twenty years, made the extent of all the time I had ever passed in the island, admiration became coupled with envy. I was cross-questioned, closely as good breeding would at all permit, as to the manner in which I had acquired the language. "Perhaps, Monsieur's father or mother was English?" "Neither; nor grandfathers nor grandmothers, for many generations." "Monsieur may have been aided by some similarity in the construction of his native tongue to the English?" "There is some resemblance, certainly." A pause followed, in expectation that they were about to be told what that country was. I continued mute. "Monsieur must have commenced learning the language very early?" "I have spoken it from childhood." "It is a great advantage." "In the

country in which I was born and educated, we all learn the English in childhood." *Des grands yeux*, and looks of distrust. Thinking it time to retreat, I wished them good night, in bad French, and hurried off. As my passport was in my pocket, and these good democrats trouble no one with their police regulations, I escaped without detection. The most curious part of this little occurrence was the fact, that all this time, "great and glorious" America, and the "twelve millions," were no more thought of, than you would think of a trading factory on the coast of Africa, in enumerating the countries that speak French!

When an Englishman speaks of his countrymen, meaning the people of the nation, he says in a lordly way, the English, or Englishmen; but the Scot is obliged to bring himself in under the denomination of "Britons," "the British," or "British subjects." In like manner, when a European makes an allusion to the civilized world, he invariably says, "Europe," as in "European civilization," "European reputation," "European intelligence." America is never dreamt of. I have several times observed looks of surprise, when I have spoken of "Christendom," in making similar allusions. Whatever may be the case on grave occasions, the European, in his ordinary discourse, does not appear to admit the western hemisphere at all within the pale of his civilization.

END OF VOLUME I.